Incidents of Western Travel:

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS.

BY

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Contents.

PREFACE ..... PAGE vi

LETTER I.

LEAVING HOME—PARSON BROWN—SWAPPING HATS—NASHVILLE—THE CUMBERLAND—LIFE OF NEWTON—THE PROFANE MATE—ST. LOUIS. 1

LETTER II.

LEAVING ST. LOUIS—HERMANN—PACIFIC RAILROAD—UP THE MISSOURI—PERILS OF NAVIGATION—BOONVILLE—POLITE LANDLORD—BOVINE MONSTERS—THE PRAIRIES—THE OSAGE—WARSAW—DEEPENING THE RIVER—LOST—KANSAS TRAVELLER..... 22

LETTER III.

BAD WEATHER—SPRINGFIELD—A BEAUTIFUL VALLEY—BENTONVILLE—THE PIOUS WIDOW—PLENTY OF APPLES—CHEROKEE INDIANS—TAHLEQUAH—INDIAN COUNCIL—FORT GIBSON—FAT LANDLORD—BEAUTIFUL SCENERY—CHIMNEY MOUNTAIN—INDIAN MISSION CONFERENCE 38

LETTER IV.

DROUGHT—INDIAN MISSION CONFERENCE—INDIAN SCHOOLS—DECREASE OF HEATHEN AND INCREASE OF CHRISTIAN INDIANS—INDIANS LEARNING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE..... 41

LETTER V.

JAMES M'HENRY—INDIANS IN COUNCIL—CHILI M'INTOSH—PREACHING TO THE INDIANS—ALTAR-WORK—CONVERSIONS AMONG THEM..... 46

LETTER VI.

METHODIST PREACHERS: MORE NEEDED—GATHERING A CONGREGATION—QUICKSANDS—THE FIDDLER—MAN WITH NO APPETITE—INDIAN CABIN—SUPPER—COFFEE—LODGING—WHEN AN INDIAN CAN SPEAK ENGLISH..... 53

LETTER VII.

ON THE ROAD—CHOCTAW AGENCY—INDIAN GATHERING—TOBLEECHUBBEE—SCHOOLS AT NEW HOPE AND FORT COFFEE—DUST—VAN BUREN, ARKANSAS—FORT SMITH—ARKANSAS CONFERENCE—MISSIONARY ANNIVERSARY—SABBATH SERVICES 63

LETTER VIII.

TO EL DORADO—DIFFICULTIES AHEAD—A GEORGIA FAMILY—A LATE SERVICE—HARD TRAVEL—MOUNT IDA—A NARROW ESCAPE—CADDO GAP 71

LETTER IX.

A LONELY ROAD—DANGERS—LITTLE MISSOURI RIVER—A WOMAN'S EXPEDIENT—EL DORADO—WACHITA CONFERENCE—"THE FINANCES"—TRACT AND MISSIONARY MEETINGS—THE COUNTRY 79

LETTER X.

CAMDEN—A COLLEGE SPEECH—OFF TO TEXAS—SIGNS FOR SELECTING A LODGING—A CLEAN HOUSE—FEATHER-BEDS—HEROIC FEAT—"THE WILDERNESS"—MINDEN, LA.—CROSS-ROADS 88

LETTER XI.

LOUISIANA—RED RIVER BOTTOM—SHREVEPORT—IMPROVEMENTS—GREENWOOD—THE CIRCUS—IN TEXAS 96

LETTER XII.

MARSHALL, TEXAS—EAST TEXAS CONFERENCE—REVIVALS AT CONFERENCE—OLD ACQUAINTANCES—THE SABINE RIVER—PROPERTIES OF THE WATER—TRAVELLING AND PREACHING—AN EFFORT AT SINGING 102

LETTER XIII.

MOVING FORWARD—FACE OF THE COUNTRY—"MINE HOST"—ON TRAINING CHILDREN—THE MAN WHO HAD SEEN A BISHOP—EXHORTATION TO OUR EDITORS—WORKING WITH THE BAPTISTS AT MOSCOW.. 111

LETTER XIV.

GALVESTON—HOMEWARD BOUND—NEW ORLEANS—LAKE PONCHARTRAIN—IN A FOG—MOBILE—UP THE RIVER—DRINKING, SMOKING, AND GAMING—MONTGOMERY—RAILROADS 119

LETTER XV.

LEAVING MONTGOMERY—PASSENGER PUT OVERBOARD—WALKING ON CROSS-TIES—IN GEORGIA ONCE MORE—OBSTACLES—AT HOME... 127

LETTER XVI.

END OF THE FIRST TOUR—THOUGHTS ON EMIGRATION TO THE WEST—APPEAL TO LOCAL PREACHERS..... 135

LETTER XVII.

ANOTHER TOUR—CONFERENCE INTERESTS MUTUAL—METHODISM ALIKE EVERYWHERE — REASONS FOR WRITING — FIRST STAGES OF THE JOURNEY—NASHVILLE—THE CUMBERLAND—LOUISVILLE..... 144

LETTER XVIII.

TO INDIANAPOLIS — CONFUSION — AN ELECTION — TERRE HAUTE — PROGRESS—A DISTILLERY—ILLINOIS—ST. LOUIS, AND THENCE TO JEFFERSON CITY..... 152

LETTER XIX.

TO KANSAS — AN INFORMAL SERVICE — KANSAS RUMORS — IMAGINARY DANGERS—GOVERNOR GEARY—GOVERNOR SHANNON—THE "BORDER RUFFIANS"—KANSAS CITY—DESCRIPTION THEREOF..... 158

LETTER XX.

FROM KANSAS CITY TO WESTPORT—FACE OF THE COUNTRY—BUSTLING TIMES—AN ACQUAINTANCE—BLACK CARPET-BAGS—A SHARPE'S RIFLE—SHAWNEE MISSION—A RICH FARM—A RIDE—THE QUAKER MISSION—ATCHISON'S CAMP—THE CLIMATE..... 166

LETTER XXI.

KICKAPOO — A NIGHT ALARM — THE CONFERENCE — A SELF-DENYING MINISTRY—APPEAL FOR KANSAS..... 175

LETTER XXII.

MISTAKES OF THE SOUTH AS TO KANSAS—SOLDIER-EMIGRANTS—ABOLITION AGGRESSION — SOUTHERN MISTAKES — A LETTER ON KANSAS AFFAIRS — DIFFICULTIES OF TRAVELLING IN KANSAS — THE WRONG PARTY..... 183

LETTER XXIII.

WESTON — CHINESE SUGAR-CANE — GROWTH OF THE WEST — WELL-MOUNTED PREACHERS — TAKING IN NEW APPOINTMENTS — RICH COUNTRY — FRAUDS ON THE GOVERNMENT — GLASGOW, FAYETTE, PARIS, MEXICO — MODERN CONFUSION OF TONGUES — CONFERENCE AT LOUISIANA..... 192

LETTER XXIV.

TO THE ST. LOUIS CONFERENCE—THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI—STATE FAIRS —ST. LOUIS—CHARLESTON—THE CONFERENCE—WHERE CONFERENCES SHOULD BE HELD—TO CAIRO—CROSSING THE OHIO RIVER—TO JACKSON—MEMPHIS CONFERENCE 200

LETTER XXV.

WHITE RIVER—JACKSONPORT—BREAKFAST—TO BATESVILLE—THE CONFERENCE—TO PRINCETON—TRAVELLING IN THE "TRICK"— FIRST NIGHT OUT AND THE CATS 208

LETTER XXVI.

OUT OF THE "TRICK"—PREACHING AT SEARCY—FACE OF THE COUNTRY—HICKORY PLAINS—RED OAK—LITTLE ROCK—TULIP—ARRESTED ON THE ROAD—PRINCETON—THE CONFERENCE—IN ANOTHER "TRICK" —THE STEAMER FOX—NAPOLEON 217

LETTER XXVII.

RECRUITS—GAMBLERS—VICKSBURG—GEN. M'MACKIN'S HOTEL—BILL OF FARE—THOMASTOWN—NEW-FOUND KIN—IRA BIRD—MISSISSIPPI CONFERENCE—WORN-OUT LANDS—MUD-WAGON—CAPSIZED—A BLIND DRIVER 225

LETTER XXVIII.

REALIZATION OF FOREBODINGS—PERSEVERANCE REWARDED—ALMOST A DINNER—DISTRESSING CASUALTIES—HOLLY SPRINGS 234

LETTER XXIX.

ANOTHER BREACH—BUZZARDS' ROOST—AGRICULTURAL ABUSES—TUSKEGEE—THE ALABAMA CONFERENCE: ITS CHARACTERISTICS—PLEASANT INCIDENTS—HOME AGAIN—THE END 242

Preface.

THE letters which make up this little volume were written at the suggestion, indeed, by the request, of the Editor of the Southern Christian Advocate. It was thought by him that they would give additional interest to his paper, increase its circulation, and so aid a great Church enterprise.

Other reasons influenced me. Absent from home for months, travelling thousands of miles, visiting several Conferences, mingling with the people in distant States, seeing much that was unique in the physical aspects of the country and peculiar in the habits of society, it was pleasant to throw the mind back, retrace my wanderings, call up the incidents of the way, weave them into narrative, and recite, for the gratification and instruction of friends.

Remembering the connectional character of the

Methodist Church, I thought it would be well to commune with the preachers and people of the older Conferences concerning the wants and prospects of the new. I hoped to stir up the minds and hearts of some—called of God to preach and authorized by the Church to do so, nevertheless living in comparative idleness for lack of room to work—to look to the white fields of the West, and to go out and help gather the harvest. It was believed, moreover, that such a record, by one familiarly known in the East by long service, would increase the spirit of unity and love between the different sections of the Church, as showing the oneness of Methodism in her government and policy, doctrine and experience, ministers and labors, and, indeed, every thing which characterizes her before the world. Spread over a vast territory, embracing society in all its forms, from the pioneer settlements on the frontier to the highest civilization of the old Atlantic cities, it will be impossible to keep alive the reciprocal sympathies of a great Christian communion except as it shall appear to *all* that *each* section is working out on a common system the grand mission of

Methodism. We who circulate everywhere through the Connection may be supposed better prepared than others to report the signs of the times, and thus aid to promote the feeling of mutual interest so important to our unity and efficiency.

Concerning the form and style of these communications, of course opinions vary according to taste. Some will regard them as too minute in details, and too scanty in reflections. Some will object that there is too much of the playful: others will think this is their only redeeming quality. Some will think too much space is given to the every-day incidents of travel, and that I ought to have confined myself to a semi-official account of the phases of Methodism, as modified by society here and there. Well, perhaps the complainants are all right and all wrong. If they will take the trouble to read, each will find something suited to his notion, in substance if not in dress. A simple, easy, epistolary style was adopted, as best suited to the ends in view.

Literary reputation certainly was not thought of in furnishing these "incidents" for publication. The time consumed in the mere mechanical labor

of writing, is the sum total of their cost. Easy to write and easy to read, they were never intended to tax the brain of author or reader. Unpretending as they are, it is some consolation to be assured, as I often am, that they have been read with pleasure, and that in more ways than one they have done good. This is all I could ask or wish.

The Book Editor, Dr. Summers, proposes to put the letters into more permanent form; and I have consented to the arrangement, not because such a volume would be a contribution to Methodist literature, but that, among many acquaintances, some *few friends* would like to have even *such* a memorial of one they have long known and will not hereafter often see.

THE AUTHOR.

SUNSHINE, May 11, 1857.

INCIDENTS OF WESTERN TRAVEL.

INCIDENTS OF WESTERN TRAVEL.

LETTER I.

LEAVING HOME—PARSON BROWN—SWAPPING HATS—NASHVILLE—THE CUMBERLAND—LIFE OF NEWTON—THE PROFANE MATE—ST. LOUIS.

HAVING recently finished a trip of about four thousand miles—out and in, forth and back—I suppose I may take rank with those who have been from home. The transatlantic traveller is said to have been "*abroad*," while he who wanders about this long, wide continent is merely a tourist or traveller. In either case the fashion is to take "notes by the way," and to publish. With permission, I will imitate the popular example, and tell what I saw, heard, felt, and thought, during my visit to the Indian Mission, Arkansas, Wachita, East Texas, and Texas Conferences.

On the 20th September, 1855, accompanied by

my son Lovick, early in the morning, I took the stage for Double Wells, on the Georgia Railroad. A ride in an inferior vehicle, with horses the worse for wear, prepared us to appreciate the speed and comfort of the rail. Our driver was facetious, and entertained us with sundry witticisms on men and horses. One of the team, that morning, he had dubbed "*Parson Brown;*" whether on account of his grave looks or his steady habits, I did not learn. The driver commented at large on the "Parson's" merits and demerits, the second branch of the subject affording much the wider field for expatiation. His besetting *sin*, I learned, was laziness, and his chief infirmity, a short memory. However, by diligent application of the lash, by jerks, and clucks, and shouts, we reached the dépôt just in time for the cars to Atlanta. Farewell to hacks and horses; and if for ever, still be it so. Too slow for the "progress," and too rough for the luxury of the age—farewell.

The Georgia Railroad and its scenery are too familiar for description. We soon reached Madison, where I stopped to leave my daughter and to see my brothers. About midnight I and my travelling companion once more entered the cars and whirled away. On leaving home, I had put on my best beaver—in fact, a new hat—and on finding a seat,

as is my wont, I prepared for sleep. I hung my hat upon a hook, and composed myself to rest. When I came to myself, we were in Atlanta, the cars empty, *my new hat gone*, and an *old* one in its stead. I rushed out, and found everybody busy about luggage, and its transfer to other trains. Having secured my trunk, I went "prospecting" for my hat. As all around me were in motion, I stood still. Presently a long, gawky man, though well dressed, came along, and I observed that his hat was *too big* for him and was new, and the old relic I had on was too small for me. But, satisfied from the circumstances of the case that a mistake had not been made, but that some stealing had been done, I hesitated to accost the—gentleman. But the desire to have a hat that fitted, and that would "make the trip," as they say in Texas, overcame my reluctance. So, very significantly, I said to him, "You got hold of the wrong hat this morning, Sir. *This* (handing him his wornout headpiece) will fit you better than the one you have on: suppose we exchange?" He told a *story*, but gave me my hat.

Now for the State Road and Chattanooga. We are off, and, without accident or incident, reach the terminus of the road—dine, and are once more on the rail for Nashville. Lookout Mountain

looms darkly over us as we wind along its base, and the shadows of night thicken around us. Now the moon struggles up the cloudy heavens, and while the valleys rest in yet deeper gloom, the circling ridges are gilded with silver light; and, as we sweep round one of the many curves along this great highway, a mountain on fire greets our gaze. But the iron horse will not pause, and we leave the scene, with all its elements of beauty and grandeur. What bridges, and curves, and gorges, along this route! To weak nerves, how frightful! Even the strong man feels safer when he is over.

In the early dawn we reached the City of Rocks. Hiring a carriage, we drove up to the residence of Dr. Summers, and found him on his knees at the family altar. Of course we did not interrupt him, but waited patiently for the end. O that this pious custom of morning and evening devotions with wife, children, and servants were universal; at least, with Church members!

Prayer finished, we knocked, and the Doctor opened the door, and, with a welcome *à la Summers*, we entered the hospitable mansion. What a man for work is my host! And yet he has time to eat, sleep, talk, or for any other odd job. His plan is elastic: he can expand it without derangement, or stop the machinery, if need be, without losing a

half-day to start it again. His system has none of the rigidity of mere form, but all the activity of a vital organism. He is not punctilious about little rules, but always busy; not wedded to a set order, so there is motion and progress. Accordingly, he *does* more than any man I know, and slights nothing—does every thing well. He keeps that rule of a preacher—"Never be unemployed, never be triflingly employed;" and thus is an example to us all.

It was my purpose to spend the Sabbath in Nashville, but a boat, highly recommended, left in the afternoon of Saturday, the day of my arrival, and, by the advice of the brethren, I went aboard the "Sallie West," bound for St. Louis.

At four P. M. we weighed anchor and drifted slowly beneath the wire bridge, in full view of the Methodist Publishing House, and then we were fairly afloat upon the basin of the Cumberland. In the famous debate on the location of our Southern Book Concern, at the General Conference in Columbus, some preacher called this river "Goose Creek," in derision. I found it, as I always had, navigable; and from the height of its banks and the breadth of the stream, I should say that, winter and summer, it is, for steamboats, the most reliable river in the West, save only the

Father of Waters. At any rate, I have fared better on it in the way of getting along without difficulty, than on the Ohio, Missouri, or any other river, except the Mississippi.

I found myself a stranger among my fellow-passengers, and, as I had purchased books in Nashville, I did not seek to make new acquaintances, but made ready for reading. Among other books, I got the Life of Robert Newton, and I beg to commend it to every Methodist preacher. Circumstances did not allow preaching on the boat; so, having read some portions of the Holy Bible, I spent the Sabbath-day in perusing the interesting biography of a great and good man. What a man—what an example was Newton! How much he did! How hard and long he worked! Did he do more than his duty? Who thinks so? And if *he* hardly reached the gospel rule of labors, what idlers are many of us who minister at the altar! I confess to a feeling of humiliation in reviewing my life, as I read, and in my berth on that boat I pledged myself to a more active consecration. No doubt every preacher would feel as I did; at least—the brethren will pardon me—I know none who could make the comparison, unrebuked. I do not speak of results, but of effort. The issue of this book is timely.

The tendency everywhere is to contract the field of labor; to do less; to preach less frequently, and to rest longer. Read this book, ye sound, hearty, healthy Methodist preachers, who do not work so much as a *conscientious* supernumerary ought to do, and keep a good conscience if you can. May the dead Newton — buried in English ground — still speak to the ministry and the Church in the living records of this American reprint of his biography.

The mate of our boat could do more volunteer, expletive swearing than any man I ever heard. He horrified me. Inwardly resolved to talk with him, I embraced the first opportunity, although expecting to be repelled. To my astonishment, he seemed subdued by the first word, and bewailed the follies of his life. He had been a Methodist; but, an orphan boy, poor, and doomed to struggle unaided with the ills of life, he had drifted from place to place, from business to business; and, cut off from religious association, he had fallen, fallen, till blasphemy and sin had become his daily history. O how many wandering stars there are, shooting on to the blackness of darkness! Whether my well-meant exhortation availed to reclaim this backslidden brother or not, it secured me and others from the din of his imprecations.

The Sabbath evening came, and, having done

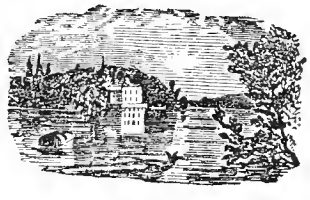
what I could to improve the day, I rested from thought and care till morning light. Travelling by water to me grows irksome, after a day or two. Three meals a day—reading a little, talking a little, walking a little, and all the while, paddle, paddle, puff, puff: now stop to put off freight; then stop to take on something or somebody—one gets tired—at least I do—and the first step on solid ground brings a thrill of pleasure.

On Tuesday night we reached St. Louis, and in the morning went ashore. We drove up to Brother Polk's, with whom I stayed during the General Conference of 1850, and found him and his amiable wife warm-hearted and hospitable as ever.

St. Louis is called, I believe, "The Giant of the West," and in truth it deserves the cognomen. Young, with vast proportions, rapidly growing, its full dimensions no man can forecast. "The City Fathers" are planning wisely and munificently for its ornament, and for the future comfort of its multiplied population. This place is one of the strongholds of Romanism in America. Schools, convents, and priests abound. The black-robed ministers of Rome move stealthily along the streets; and I fancied that I could see an ominous shadow in advance, and yet deeper gloom rushing

after them. Protestantism should be reinforced in St. Louis. More strong, bold men are wanted, not to fight, but to pray; not to quarrel, but to preach "the truth as it is in Jesus." Heaven help Methodism to do her part in defeating the "man of sin," and in diffusing through all the West a pure Christianity.

On inquiring for the preachers, I found that all (pastors and the editor) had gone to the Missouri Conference. Pressed for time, I made haste to purchase a buggy and a pair of horses for the long land travel before me. On consultation, it was determined that I had better go up the Missouri river to Boonville, and take a prairie route, and thus avoid the Ozark Mountains. I lost a day or two in time, but gained largely on the score of road and comfort.



LETTER II.

LEAVING ST. LOUIS—HERMANN—PACIFIC RAILROAD—UP THE MISSOURI—PERILS OF NAVIGATION—BOONVILLE—POLITE LANDLORD — BOVINE MONSTERS — THE PRAIRIES — THE OSAGE—WARSAW—DEEPENING THE RIVER—LOST—KANSAS TRAVELLER.

My last left me at St. Louis, where, having secured an outfit, I put my horses and buggy aboard the "Martha Jewett," bound for Lexington on the Missouri, and lay over one night, purposing to take the great Pacific Railroad, and to intercept the boat at Hermann—the point to which the cars were running at the time of my visit.

This little town has a German population devoted to the culture of the grape, and to wine-making. Here the passengers dined, and, of a great number, I believe I was about the only one who did not test by actual experiment the qualities of the staple product of the place. They seemed to relish the flavor of the article, if I might judge from their comments, or the quantity consumed.

This railroad, as the name implies, is a magnificent project. The route along which it runs is picturesque, but full of difficulties. In fifty miles we passed through several tunnels, all short, but all through solid rock. The road runs generally along the bank of the river, which on one side seems walled in by an almost mountainous ridge. A section of the base is dug down, or rather blasted off, and the material thus obtained is used to make the bed of the road—leaving a perpendicular wall on one side, and the rushing waters of the turbid Missouri on the other. It is a splendid contrivance for fatal accidents. The breaking of an axle—a run-off—must dash the passenger, either against a granite wall, or into a watery grave. But no matter: it is one of the projected ways to the land of gold and the luxuries of the East. With such objects ahead, the Anglo-American dreads no peril, fears no cost. Progress is the word, "manifest destiny" a law—*the* law.

But yonder comes the boat. We go aboard, and find the captain a gentleman in manners and spirit, and the crowd of passengers orderly, sedate, and all disposed to contribute to the general happiness. After leaving St. Louis, all to me was new, and so I travelled with my eyes open.

It is to the Missouri river that the Mississippi

is indebted for its current and its turbid waters. Though very low on my trip, still it rushed like a torrent, and I witnessed several of those landslides, on a small scale, which are perpetually changing the channel of the river, and making the stream itself a sort of running mud-hole. The passage of steamboats at low water on this river is one of the marvels of navigation. In many places not only is the channel narrow, but from bank to bank it seems guarded by the most formidable snags, straight, crooked, forked, pointing outward, inward, crosswise, forming often what in military phrase is called *chevaux de frise.* I very often thought our craft was at the end of her journeying, but I was mistaken. She would creep in among these "sawyers," and when one, being struck, would lower his head a little, the bell would ring, and on would go the steam, and over and through we would pass. I soon learned that the logs which keep their heads above water and lie parallel with the current are not dreaded much, but those which lie on the bottom across the river are the great difficulty. I found much amusement in listening to the man who sounded the depth, and I soon learned to prognosticate a thump upon the bottom. The man throws his lead, and cries with a sort of Irish accent and nasal tone, "Six fate—five

fate—five and a half—four fate—three and a half." Now look out—"Three feet!" There, now she strikes. The boat is fast on a sand-bar, or balanced on a log. When she will get off is doubtful; perhaps in an hour—it may be a half day. Sometimes, while we were struggling to move along, within sight might be seen two or three other boats all fast—puffing and paddling, spars in the water, capstan turning, all hands busy, and, sad to tell, many tongues blaspheming. Backward or forward, no matter which way, so the boat moves. Sooner or later the task is finished, and on we go rejoicing, but fearing a like mishap.

At Jefferson City, a man came aboard who keeps a wood-yard just above. While standing alone, he approached me, and as I made some slight remark about the river as a navigable stream, he broke forth into the most eloquent eulogium: "More boats plied its waters, fewer accidents occurred on it, it was navigable longer in the year, than any river in the United States." Said I, "Is it better than the Hudson?" "Ah! stranger, I give that up. That is just one river alone by itself." Content with checkmating his self-conceit even for a moment, I let him go on. "Diana of the Ephesians" was "great," for by her he got his gain in the sale of wood.

Leaving St. Louis on Thursday, we expected to reach Boonville on Saturday evening, but the logs and the sand-bars delayed us till Sabbath afternoon. I must not omit to mention that when I called, on the passage, at the captain's office, to pay my fare, he—as they say on the Western waters—"*chalked my hat;*" which being interpreted means, that he charged nothing either for me or my son.

On going ashore, I went up to the hotel and found it crowded, but succeeded in obtaining a room, as I promised to leave early in the morning. Mine host—by the way, a namesake—was thus particular, because in the morning the State Fair opened, and a great rush of people was anticipated. When the supper-bell rang, I followed the throng into the eating-room, but was too late—every chair and plate was appropriated. Nothing was left, as I thought, but to wait the next turn; but as I was leaving the room, the polite proprietor, thinking, perhaps, that I was disconsolate, seized me by the arm—led me out of the house through the yard (not saying a word, but leaving me to conjecture what he meant) till he reached a temporary shelter, and then bade me look through a crack. I obeyed, and saw a long table burdened with empty dishes; as I turned to look at him,

with a triumphant air he said, "You see what preparation I have made for my guests. Don't you think there will be room enough for all?" I assented, but the prospect did not satisfy my appetite; I still longed for my supper. My time came at last, and I did ample justice to a feast of fat things.

When I came out, the church-bells were ringing, and I sallied out to find the Methodist church. After many inquiries I found it, and stopped at the door, intending, if I could identify the preacher, to reveal myself and preach for him. In this I failed, and so I sat down with the few who were out, and heard a very fair sermon from the preacher in charge.

Early in the morning we left, without guide or any particular directions, for Versailles—forty miles distant—on our way to the Indian Mission Con ference. For miles we met the country-people going in to the fair. Every kind of vehicle had been pressed into service, and, in the way of locomotives, the animal world was well represented. Of course the horse was the most popular as a riding animal, but several persons were mounted on ox-back.

And here let me say, the ox in Northern Missouri is as far superior in size to the Carolina and

Georgia steers, as Job's warhorse to an Indian pony. They are an elephantine race. Four, six, and eight pair, all of which I saw, constitute a team, equal to any load a wagon can bear. It is common to hitch sixteen of these bovine monsters to a plough to turn over the prairie sod. The plough cuts thirty-six inches with every furrow. I saw this work going on, and it made me ashamed of Southern agriculture.

During this day's ride, for the first time in my life, I saw a *bona fide* prairie. After passing over a very broken country, well wooded, and tolerably settled, we came suddenly on one of those wide-spread plains with which the West abounds. I call them plains, because in them are hundreds of acres perfectly level; they are destitute of timber, and there is very little to obstruct the vision; but generally they are undulating. They remind one of the ocean; and if, when the sea is rolling in heavy swells, its waters could be arrested in their flow and all made still, the type would be perfect. In these almost boundless wilds, water is scarce, but wherever a stream runs, there the timber grows, and, of course, near these two indispensable articles, all the settlements are found. The scarcity of water and the intense cold of this region are the great drawbacks upon this otherwise

very desirable country. The land is fertile—producing from fifteen to thirty bushels of wheat to the acre, and from fifty to one hundred bushels of corn. Oats of the finest quality are abundant, and I found that my horses, fed on clean oats, travelled with more spirit and seemed less fatigued with a long drive than when fed on corn.

With a good road and fresh horses, we accomplished the first day's travel and reached the inn at the little prairie town before sundown. It was the first day of October, and very cold, and we found the fireside a very pleasant retreat from the sharp winds which had fanned us all the day long.

On the next day we pursued our journey, forty miles, to Warsaw, on the Osage river. The hotel was undergoing repairs, and we had very airy lodgings for a cold night. On inquiry, the innkeeper told me that he paid sixty-six dollars a thousand for every foot of lumber he was using. He bought in St. Louis, shipped to Boonville, and then wagoned it eighty miles. Pretty expensive and troublesome building, that!

Warsaw aspires to the dignity of an inland port. This she expects to realize by narrowing the channel of the river just opposite. At this point the stream is wide and flat, with a gravelly

bed. When we crossed by fording next morning, we found *two* men and mules with scrapers raking the gravel into a ridge on one side, hoping, I suppose, that the current would do the digging and the deepening. The faith of the people in the success of the project must be weak, as they employ such cheap machinery in the enterprise.

To-day on the Osage, and the streams which run into it, we have some very fine lands, but the settlements are few and far between. When we reached the next noted stand, late in the afternoon, the proprietor informed us that he could not take us in, as his family were sick, and his lots crowded with mules on their way to the South. He said there was a house five miles ahead where we could find lodgings.

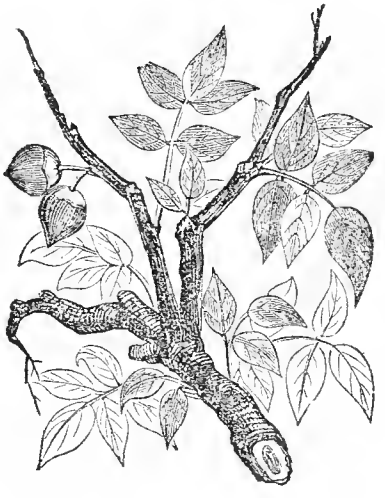
On we went, and found the house, and hailed its inmates: a lad of some sixteen summers came out, and told us very decidedly that we could not stay there. "Why, I was told you kept a public-house here." "We did," said he, "but we have never taken anybody in since *that* storm." The sun was setting, and a cloudy night at hand. "How far to the next house?" "Five miles," was the answer.

Once more we took up the line of march. Darkness came down upon us—the road was invisible—the horses nearly out of sight—the

rain threatening to descend, and yet no sign of a human habitation. Now the idea struck me that possibly we had passed the place, and to move on or go back was a question of no little concern. In mid debate of this interesting topic, we found ourselves out of the road among the bushes. The point of our departure was uncertain, and on which side of us lay the right track was somewhat doubtful—no very pleasant condition in a thinly inhabited region. We put out for the prairie on our left, trusting that instinct and habit would incline the horses to take the road if we struck it at all. In this we judged rightly, and a mile or less brought us to the desired haven. The light beaming through the window upon the outer darkness, and the soft voice which cried "Come in," were very grateful, as they ended our anxieties, and promised rest to our weariness.

At this place lived an old widow and her daughter. They were Methodists—the house was one of the preaching places for the circuit. So I let them know that I was a preacher, and they make me feel quite at home. Presently a foot-traveller arrived, and he too was admitted under the hospitable roof. After prayer we retired, and the pedestrian informed me he was returning from Kansas—of which he gave a sad account.

He left, he said, because they had so little preaching out there. But this man, who loved the gospel so well, left without paying his bill in the morning. O, human nature!



LETTER III.

BAD WEATHER — SPRINGFIELD — A BEAUTIFUL VALLEY — BENTONVILLE—THE PIOUS WIDOW—PLENTY OF APPLES —CHEROKEE INDIANS—TAHLEQUAH—INDIAN COUNCIL— FORT GIBSON — FAT LANDLORD — BEAUTIFUL SCENERY— CHIMNEY MOUNTAIN—INDIAN MISSION CONFERENCE.

THE next day we had *the pleasure* of driving through prairie mud, with ever and anon a descending shower, and both together made travelling a task to our horses, and brought us once more into the night before we reached lodgings. Amid rain and cold we arrived at Springfield, which, like "Fame's proud temple," rests upon an eminence, up which the traveller toils with slow and laborious steps.

The next morning it was sleeting, and, soon after we left, a genuine snow-storm fell upon us for three hours or more—to a Southern man, a strange sight for the fifth day of October. With bad road, rain, sleet, and snow, we took up early in the evening, and found comfortable entertainment at

Mr. Smith's. Whether it was "*John*," or not, I did not inquire.

The next day we passed over a road, the beauty of which would repay one for the trouble of going to see it. It winds along a valley, for the most part, sometimes with lofty ridges on either side, covered with white flint rock—tall trees, without any undergrowth, towering up from base to summit, and presently a mountain lifts its majestic form before you; and all the while, without jolt or jar, even wearied horses will carry you over the gravelly road, six or seven miles the hour. It is Macadamized by Nature's cunning hand, smooth, elastic, and generally descending in the direction we were going. The very horses seemed low-spirited, when by and by we reached the hills and the rocks. The last few miles of this day's travel were rough enough to endear the morning's ride, and to make a stopping-place very desirable. We found it at the house of a gentleman whose face struck me as familiar, and, on asking after his "antecedents," I found that he used to bring horses to my native county in my early boyhood.

The next day was the Sabbath, and we left to reach Bentonville, a little town in North Arkansas, in time for preaching. But the wretched road defeated us. We were too late—the congregation

was dispersing as we came in sight, and nothing was left us but to hunt a home for the evening and night. This we found by going beyond the village to an old widow-lady's, to whose hospitable roof we were recommended. We found her alone, old, crippled, but cheerful, a beautiful example of Christian trust and hope. Seldom have I had a more pleasant or profitable conversation than with this aged disciple. Religion was to her a companion and a guardian, a solace, and an earnest of heaven to come. It was beautiful to see her old eyes flash with inward joy, and to hear her tongue, eloquent with intelligence and piety, discourse of her trust in Providence, and her readiness to depart when the Master should call.

After tea and evening prayer, as my son and myself were about to retire, she asked if I would object to sleeping in a room where there was a large pile of apples. I told her, "I had no objection, but I did not think it safe for her to trust my travelling companion in such a place." She laughed, and told Lovick to take as many as he wanted. He was not slow to take her at her word. The supply relieved our thirst, in the absence of water, many a time in the next two or three days. This fruit is raised abundantly in the region through which we were passing, and pays well

when carried to market. Large quantities are wagoned to Western Texas, and sold at *ten cents per apple.* A very remunerative price!

On Monday morning we left our venerable hostess, and took a sort of trail for the Cherokee Nation. The way was very narrow, but open and remarkably well located, considering the topography of the country. About noon we crossed the line and left the States behind us. My son had never seen an Indian, and was all curiosity. It was not long before we came suddenly upon a group of men and women, boys and girls, in the yard before a little cabin. They were taken by surprise, and, contrary to Indian habit, gave themselves up to wonder at seeing a man on wheels in that wild region. One pair of eyes gazed on them from the buggy in eager observation. I reined up, slackened speed, that both parties might be satisfied, and wished for a daguerreotypist to take the picture. That night, we stayed with a half-breed, and took our first lesson in the fare of the Indian country. The mistress of the house, however, was a white woman, and rather neat and tidy in her person and domestic economy. I have seen better places, and I have seen worse.

On the 8th of October we rode into Tahlequah, the capital of the Cherokee Nation. The Council was

in session, and we tarried an hour or two to dine and see the chief men of the tribe. The house at which we stopped was kept by an Indian and his wife—both full-bloods—and we found every thing clean and nice. The man was absent, but the lady entertained us well, both with her cooking and her conversation. John Ross, the chief, we failed to see, as he had gone out to his residence, four miles distant. During the year he had joined the Methodists, and promises to exert a most wholesome moral influence upon his people.

The Indian Mission Conference was to meet in the morning at nine o'clock, and I was still near seventy miles short of it. We left reluctantly, but duty urged us on.

That night we reached Fort Gibson, and stayed with a man who is worthy of some description. He was an old soldier, holding the post of ordnance-sergeant, but has unquestionably outlived the days of active service. Like Falstaff, he is of goodly dimensions, exceeding any man in the girth I ever saw. Though the weather was cold, he was in his shirt-sleeves, and was puffing as one oppressed with heat. When we drove up, he very bluffly declined to receive us, declaring that he did not keep a public-house. "I was directed to your house, sir, with the assurance that you did take in

travellers." "Well, I do, sometimes, but my wife is sick, and I am not fixed for you." "Where can I stay to-night?" He commenced giving me directions to another house; when in the midst, he paused, and, with an expletive I will not repeat, he said, "It is too bad to send a gentleman to such a place; get down, I will do the best I can for you." Down we got, and having provided for our horses—being waited on by a Creek Indian who could not speak a word of English—we entered the house, and found a retired soldier's fare not bad to take at the end of a long day's journey.

In the morning, the old sergeant asked me if I was not a "professor of the gospel." Paying the heaviest bill on the whole route, we left in haste to reach the Asbury Manual Labor School, the seat of the Conference.

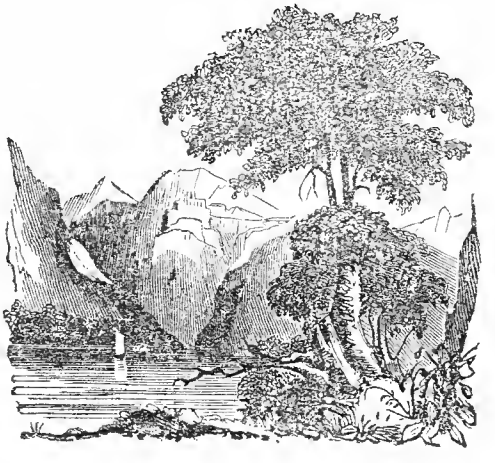
Within a mile of the Fort we crossed the Neosho and Arkansas rivers, fording both with ease. Ascending the bank of the last and crossing the swamp, we entered upon the prairie once again. The country from Tahlequah, in the Cherokee, to North Fork, in the Creek Nation, is the most picturesque I ever saw. The views are sometimes enchanting. Valleys, plains, and hills—the last often naked, diversified in form, sometimes crowned with timber—variegate the scenery and furnish the

eye with endless gratification. Occasionally the slate rock crops out on the side of some gentle acclivity, and forms a wall so regular as to suggest the idea that art has been lending its aid to enclose a lawn or garden; and the trees above grow with such regularity as to complete the illusion, and leave you under the expectation of seeing a white cottage gleaming through the foliage. But no—Nature alone is here. From some primeval period—how far back in the roll of centuries who can tell?—these scenes have blossomed in vernal and in summer suns and rains—faded in autumn—perished in winter—but to revive in beauty more luxuriant, with only some wandering eye to admire them. Our Maker must delight in the beautiful, or there would not have been such a seeming waste of tints and hues and all the forms of wild natural scenery.

The hills of which I write sometimes aspire to the dignity of mountains. One, called Chimney Mountain, from its peculiar shape, seems to preside over the prairie and to watch every passer-by. For twenty miles or more it is seemingly about you; you cannot escape it; turn any way, there it is; you feel haunted and then attracted; and when at last some rival mound, aided by distance, hides it from your vision, you feel as if you had looked

for the last time on some old familiar landmark, or had bidden a friend farewell. To see this country in the spring, when the grass is green and the earth looks new, if I had the time, (and the money,) I would cheerfully encounter the labor of this long, long travel. At such a time it must be "beautiful exceedingly."

Early in the afternoon, after a hard drive of forty-five miles, we reached the place of Conference, and received a hearty welcome from the white man and the Indian.



LETTER IV.

DROUGHT—INDIAN MISSION CONFERENCE—INDIAN SCHOOLS—DECREASE OF HEATHEN AND INCREASE OF CHRISTIAN INDIANS—INDIANS LEARNING THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

On our arrival at the Asbury Manual Labor School, after the salutations of friends and an introduction to strangers, our first request was for water—the best of all beverages, and never more appreciated by us than at this time. Forty-five miles—*prairie miles*, the longest in the world—we had travelled without the refreshment of water for man or beast, and a cool draught from a living well was a luxury beyond price. The whole region over which we had passed during the day was suffering from a drought of eighteen months' duration. The creeks and branches which, in an ordinary season, wind their serpentine way through these grassy plains, had long since ceased to run, and the Indian inhabitants and the passing traveller were alike dependent upon the stagnant pools, which the cattle had fouled with their feet. When

offered to my horses, they blew their nostrils in disgust, and, though suffering from thirst, declined the noxious mass—it could hardly be called a fluid. The people, however, take up a bucket of this mixture and leave it to settle. When the dirt has been precipitated and the surface has been skimmed, the liquid is tolerable, "in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is."

It would be well if all who are skeptical about the possibility of evangelizing the Indians could attend a session of our Conference among them. Indeed, even those who never doubted the redeeming, elevating power of the gospel might have their faith confirmed and their ideas exalted by the services and sympathies of such an occasion. I confess to strange and commingled emotions, for days and nights, while the business of Conference was in progress. The place, the school, the Conference, each and all make an interesting paragraph in the current history of this aboriginal race. But a generation gone they were heathens: now they have flourishing academies, houses of religious worship, the apparel and the manners of civilization, districts, stations, and circuits, the white man's book, his gospel, and his preacher.

How strange is every thing around me! I have just passed over a wild, vacant country, dreary but

for its beauty, with here and there, at long intervals, a hut or wigwam; and now, here is a large three-story brick building—a schoolhouse—with superintendent, teachers, male and female, and an Annual Conference assembled within its walls! The bell rings, and we all descend to the dining-hall: the boys sit at one table, a teacher at the head; the girls at another, the guests at a third. All in order; no rushing and jamming; and now every one at his place awaits in silence the invocation of a blessing upon the bounteous board. Is this an Indian country? Who maketh these to differ from their kind and even from themselves? Is this magic? Yes, but not of Aladdin's Lamp. Christian benevolence has wrought the change. The gospel and schools, Christianity and education, have greatly reformed, improved, and elevated these tribes. You can see it in the first red man you meet on the highway. Yon cabin and enclosure evince the fact. That quiet audience, eager for the word of life, proclaims the change and the cause of it. Listen to that song—that prayer. The dialect is strange—an unknown tongue—you cannot understand it; but you *feel* that he who speaks "knows in whom he has believed." From a thousand causes the tendency among all the roaming tribes is to extinction.

They are perishing. Every year leaves their numbers less. But the Cherokees, Creeks, and Choctaws multiply—increase. Chili McIntosh informed me that the Creeks had increased *two thousand in five years!* This fact proves a change of habits, physical and moral, and is a decided vindication of the plans of the government in their settlement, and of the Church in their instruction.

The desire to learn the English language is almost universal among them. They seem to regard the knowledge of it as one of the chief agents of their elevation, and as a security against the relapse into their former ignorance and superstition. This is a powerful motive with them in patronizing the schools, and they avow the wish that their language may perish with the old and adult population. This is the true policy for them and for us. It is a sound, albeit it is an Indian's philosophy. And I will say, in passing, it is the right policy for the State and the Church in reference to all our foreign population, whether we seek to Americanize or Christianize them. Individual conversions there may be, but we shall never imbue the mass with American ideas, sentiments, and the Protestant religion, until in their progress and improvement they reach a point at which we can communicate with them in a language be-

tween which and their old ideas there is no association. Without this the work of mental amalgamation will never go on. The parent will perpetuate in his child all his transatlantic errors, political, religious, social, and ecclesiastical. For long, long generations they will be as French, as German, as Swedish as the people they left in their fatherland.

The necessity to learn our language ought to be thrown upon them by refusing to translate our laws or to print a paper in their mother-tongue. In our Church movements, we should rely far more upon Protestant Christian schools for the rising generation, than upon the translation of the Bible and preaching to the adults. This subject is delicate in its relation, but it is worthy of discussion. Another time I may touch it; at present to pursue it is to wander. In my next, I give some account of my Indian acquaintances.

LETTER V.

JAMES M'HENRY—INDIANS IN COUNCIL—CHILI M'INTOSH—PREACHING TO THE INDIANS—ALTAR-WORK—CONVERSIONS AMONG THEM.

I MUST close my account of this interesting Indian Mission Conference. Nothing special occurred during the session save the admission into the travelling connection of James McHenry—better known in Georgia and Alabama as "Jim Henry"—the hero of the Creek war in 1836. The lion has become a lamb—the *brave* a preacher. The war-whoop is hushed: the midnight foray is with the past: the Bible and the Hymn Book fill the hands that once grasped the torch and tomahawk. The bold, valiant savage, who spread consternation among the peaceful settlements on either side of the Chattahoochee, now travels a circuit, preaching peace on earth, good-will to men. The Lord make him an apostle to his people! I understand that any allusion to his past history pains him sorely—no mean proof of the genuine-

ness of his repentance. A professor who delights in the narration of the evil deeds of other days dishonors himself. He ought to be "ashamed." A good man always is. The memory of the past is the burden of the present and a shadow upon the future. He remembers, not to boast in idle story, but to repent. He begs God to forgive and bless, that he himself may never forget.

One day a brother informed me that the Indian preachers wished to hold a "council" with me, and requested me to designate an hour for the interview. I did so, not knowing what they wished. They came to my room at the appointed time, and seated themselves in grave silence. I waited in vain for them to open their minds. *That* is not Indian etiquette on such occasions. They were waiting for me, and so I inquired about what matter they wished to consult, and learned that they only desired to talk with me in their own way about the Church and the schools, and the wants of the nation. They were interested in the welfare of their people, and had formed very intelligent notions of their wants, and of the best modes of supply.

In the midst of our talk, *Chili McIntosh*—well-known in Georgia, in the days of "Troup and the Treaty"—came in. The son of an old chief, him-

self a chief, the Indians all rose, in respect to the man and his title. They call him *General.* I had seen him at my native town, (Greensborough,) in my early boyhood, when, in the costume of an American Major-General, and accompanied by some fifteen or twenty of his warriors, he visited various places in Georgia. The boys and the ladies were all greatly impressed, during that tour, with his manly beauty. He was caressed, and dined, and toasted everywhere. He made a triumphal march throughout the country. In conversation, I found that he remembered every incident, private and public, in his visit to Greensborough. Among the rest, I reminded him of a question proposed to him by my father, and told him how as a boy I was impressed by his answer. The question was: "Is there any word in the Creek language for blaspheming the name of God?" The answer was: "There is not." He remembered the conversation, and reäffirmed his answer, appealing to his countrymen for its correctness. They all agreed he was right, and with one voice declared, that "*If an Indian wanted to say bad words, he must talk English.*"

McIntosh has not the height or majesty of person with which my boyish fancy invested him in other days. Though not an old man, he is now

very gray; has a mild, gentle face, more expressive of humor than of boldness, and looks as if he would like a joke better than a fight. In conversation he is entertaining, quick-witted, and ready at any time for a little fun. Wishing to hear him talk, I asked him various questions about his people, the country, the soil, and the prospects of the Nation. He says it is a much better country than the one they left, though, for years, the people were dissatisfied. On their removal, sickness prevailed, many died, and they decreased fearfully in numbers; but trial and experience reconciled them. They could not be induced to return. He says every man coming to that region must pass through a process of acclimation. Fever and ague are the doom of every settler. He said to me, "If you will stay three weeks, we will *shake* you in." As I did not tarry so long, I escaped the promised initiation.

On Sabbath morning I performed the task of preaching through an interpreter. It is not so difficult as I imagined. A man has time enough to think. Give me a sentence to start with, then, having common liberty of thought, I could make the rest in the intervals. An idea which I could convey in a dozen words, the interpreter would take a minute or two to explain. My discourse, I

am confident, could be delivered in forty minutes; but, pronounced and interpreted, it consumed two hours. The plan does not suit me. I keep too cool. Those who are accustomed to it enjoy it. They say they have the same expansion of thought, the same gushing feelings, as when preaching to the whites. A very diffuse speaker might achieve an important reformation in his style, by the exercise. Some of our long-winded parsons would break down in the *legs*, at least, if they did not quickly learn to diminish the number of sentences and curtail them in length.

On Sabbath night, I tried to preach, by request, without an interpreter, as most of the Indians would understand me, and many whites were anxious to hear. Brother Mitchell concluded with an exhortation, and invited mourners to the altar; several came forward, and the closing exercises were resigned to the Indian preachers. They sang, prayed, wept, clapped their hands, and seemed as much at home in the business as we do at a camp-meeting. The strange sounds, all barbarian to me, amused me; but the hearty tones, the spirit, the earnestness of the people, melted me to tears. I felt that the religion of the Bible had obliterated the distinctions of color, race, and nation, and that a common salvation made us

brethren in spirit, partakers of like precious faith, one in sympathy, hope, and prospect.

In conversation with the brethren, both white and Indian, I was interested in a fact of which I had not thought before, but which on digestion I regard both natural and philosophical. It is, to speak in Methodist phrase, the way these simple, untaught people get religion. With them there is no long agony of repentance, no such struggles as our civilized, refined sinners pass through; but the moment the proposition that Christianity is true is apprehended and embraced, they submit. The argument is short, overwhelming, conclusive. The Christian religion is from God: I ought to have it—I must have it—I will have it. Superstition, sin, pride, self-will are swept away: they confess, pray, believe, rejoice; and their after-life attests the reality of their moral renewal. How like to the case of the Eunuch, of Lydia, and of others is this! With them the truth is new—startling. It is a revelation, before the light of which false notions vanish. With us, the truth is familiar: we know it; but we hold it in unrighteousness. Our convictions are diluted with vain reasonings, and neutralized by long resistance. To them, the claims of God and the necessities of their nature are developed in the light of a sudden,

awful demonstration, and they capitulate. The simplicity and tenderness of the offered terms of reconciliation subdue their fears, and they yield in transport to the attractions of love Divine. But our history is one of hesitation, debate, contest; and when we conclude to try, our purposes falter; indecision relaxes our energies, doubts embarrass faith, and conversion comes at the end of a long, hard struggle. Simple faith saves the poor Indian instantly, but we are too *smart* to believe so easily, and must ask questions, and have a long strife of words and explanations before we can venture to try the prescription.

LETTER VI.

METHODIST PREACHERS — MORE NEEDED — GATHERING A CONGREGATION—QUICKSANDS—THE FIDDLER—MAN WITH NO APPETITE—INDIAN CABIN—SUPPER—COFFEE—LODGING—WHEN AN INDIAN CAN SPEAK ENGLISH.

INTERCOURSE with my brethren in the ministry is always pleasant, and it helps to make my office tolerable that it brings me into contact and acquaintance with so many, whom else I should never have seen. A genuine Methodist preacher I love with all my heart. He is a man among men. There are in him elements of moral grandeur, which exalt and ought to canonize him in public estimation. Who loves the country or does more for it than he? Who is more dead to the world and self? Self-denying, self-sacrificing, fearless of winter's cold and summer's sun — carrying the gospel to the poor—undiscouraged by "the proud man's contumely" and the world's neglect—he is always a hero, and sometimes a martyr. These are

the men who have been the sturdy pioneers of progress and order, civilization and Christianity, over all our Western wilds. The politicians and public men of Texas concede that but for the presence and influence of early Methodist preachers there, they would not have been able to maintain civil government over the heterogeneous population of the republic. God bless the memory and the example of these hardy veterans of the cross! If we could carry some of our tender-footed, soft-handed, faint-hearted, delicate parsons out West, and keep them from breaking down or running away, long enough to make a fair experiment, they might become men in the run of time.

All the Conferences that I attended need more men, and ought to have them. Georgia and Tennessee — the two Conferences, I believe, most overrun with men and applications for admission — ought to supply them. But none need go unless they are ready for hard work, hard rides on horseback, hard beds, and hard fare. Of these things there is no lack. Yet there is nothing to scare a MAN, still less to deter a Methodist preacher, who ought to be the highest style of a man. In the Indian Mission Conference we need men to preach and men to teach. Where are those, *called of God to preach*, who could not get into the Georgia

Conference because there was no place to work? There is room, brethren, in the Prairies—there are souls to be saved, service to be rendered. Can you not "stretch your line" into the "regions beyond" the comforts and conveniences of this old country? Will you go? You will find noble co-workers—Cumming and Harrell, McAlister and Mitchell, Robinson and Ruble, Duncan and Couch, and others. They will give you a brother's welcome, and the Indian's pot of "*sofkee*" will be both bread and drink. Get ready, and do something before you die.

These red-men, as has been their custom from the beginning, still live along the streams, in what they call towns. These straggling settlements are far apart, and here the circuit preachers make their appointments. When the missionary rides up to an Indian habitation, no matter what time of day, the host blows a horn, and this is the signal that preaching will come on as soon as the people can come together. He never asks the preacher if he is sick or fatigued, willing or unwilling; the horn sounds and the people come—there must be service. The most material drawback on the comfort of this work is that so much time is consumed in riding. The appointments are far apart, the

trails lonely, and the only relief to the wayfarer is in the beauty of the scenery and the piety of his meditations.

On Monday morning, the 15th of October, we left North Fork with Brother McAlister and Brother Ewing, for the Choctaw Agency. The latter brother was expecting to be transferred from the Arkansas Conference, and to take work among the Indians. Tahlequah was left to be supplied by him. The brethren were on horseback, and the roads being very rough, they outwent us a little. By-and-by we saw them ahead on the bank of a river. Brother McAlister dismounted, punching about in the edge of the water up and down the stream with his umbrella. "What is the matter—what do you mean?" said I. "We are looking for a place to cross." "What, you are not afraid to plunge into this little branch! Why, it is not knee-deep!" "Ah!" said Brother McAlister, "the *quicksand*—the *quicksand:* all these streams are dangerous. Be sure you do not let your horses stop to drink, or you may be swallowed up. Once sink a little, and you are gone." Thus admonished, we drove quickly over the wide but shallow stream. Our travelling companions entertained us with several stories about these quicksands—some

serious, some ludicrous. We passed them all in safety; but I will say I never saw such sand-bars and beds anywhere else.

To-day we crossed a mountain, and such a descent on wheels I never made before. When we reached the bottom I could hardly persuade myself that the feat had been accomplished without damage to the vehicle. This was one of the passages in life in which there were more "*downs*" than "ups." Once more we strike out upon the gently-rolling prairie. Delightful contrast! We had not travelled far ere we spied in advance of us a caravan of wagons and ox-teams, trailing its slow length along; and as we drew nigh, we heard, mingling with the shouts of the drivers, the cracking of whips, and the rumbling of wheels, other notes—so disguised, however, by the confusion of sounds, that we could not recognize them in the distance. When we reached the head of the train, lo! perched upon the top of bales and boxes, and yet under cover, was a young man scraping away upon an old fiddle—a perfect picture of self-satisfaction, oblivious with delight. He did not seem to see us. "The world forgetting, by the world forgot," he was beguiling his dull vocation of its weariness, and obviously enjoyed his success. As to the skill of the performance I am no judge; but,

to my unmusical ear, there was a charm in the tune, (I do not know what it was,) as its soft tones floated over the lone wild. It sounded like the sad wail of some solitary spirit mourning its exile from home and friends.

About noon we halted on the bank of what had been a small stream—but now was no stream at all—to rest and lunch. While thus engaged, a stranger rode up on a gaunt, fiery mustang, dismounted, and made himself very familiar in the way of chat. We invited him to dine; he declined, saying he had the chills and was not *hungry*. We pressed him a little, and finally overcame his coyness. He drew out a formidable hunter's knife, and made sad havoc with our bread and meat; but he especially distinguished himself when he came to our dessert of cakes and pies. We had laid in enough for two days, (not counting our unexpected guest,) but our store "grew small by degrees and beautifully less" with the first day's operation. The rapid disappearance of the peach pies distressed Lovick no little. He said, however, he should like to see that man perform when he *had an appetite*.

Late in the evening, we began to cast about for a lodging-place. Brother McAlister knew the way and the chances, and thought a night's lodging in the woods through which we were passing not

improbable. A little before dark we came to an Indian cabin, and by signs and gestures made known our wish to tarry for the night. By signs and gestures we were made to understand that we could stay. We were left, of course, to wait upon ourselves; so we stripped our horses and led them to water; and when we returned, our host had brought to the lot a turn of corn and fodder, and as he let his own horses out, we put ours in and fed them to our hearts' content. Now we marched to the house to see about our own prospects for food and rest. There was but one room, but this was neat and comfortable, save that there was about it an undefinable odor, any thing but pleasant. It is common, I learned, to Indian habitations. The man, his wife and children, were well clad, and were attentive and polite according to their notions. Not a word of English could we get from any of the household. They could speak it, for they understood us very well in much of our talk: that was very obvious. My good friend, McAlister, undertook to secure us a good supper by giving special directions, more particularly about the coffee—with me, when good, a favorite article. But, alas! he succeeded better with every thing else than with this necessary beverage.

By the way—pardon a little digression on this

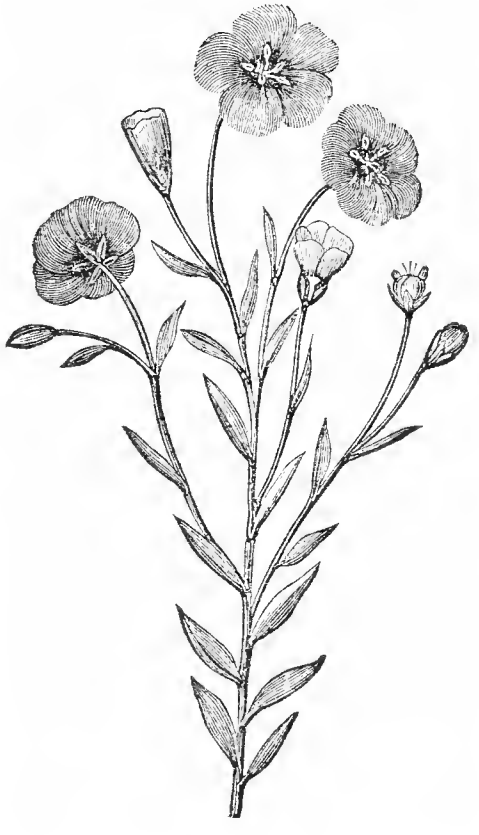
interesting theme—bad coffee is one of the afflictions of the land, and it is one of the miseries of travel. We find it everywhere—in taverns and private houses—among the rich and the poor. Often, when every thing else is clean and well prepared, the coffee is execrable stuff. Weak, or black, or unsettled, it is enough to make a well man sick. Why is this? It is not stinginess, for there is often enough of the raw material, if it had been boiled and cleared. Sometimes, it is true, a man has to drink a good deal of water to get a little coffee; but, generally, the difficulty is that the fluid is muddy, the grounds all afloat; and then "the cup cheers" not, but sadly offends sight, smell, and taste. The country needs a reform. It is more necessary to the welfare of the people than some other things that agitate the nation. In these days of Womens' Rights I will not invade their province by pretending to give a recipe. I will only say, there must be good grains, well *parched*—not burnt—well boiled, and well settled; and then, as the cookery-books say, cream (not milk) and sugar "according to taste." A lady of my acquaintance says it takes a tablespoonful of coffee to every cup; a little more would not hurt to make the article decently good. I wish the people—Indians and all—would try her proportions.

Supper over, we proposed family-prayer. Our Choctaw host had a Bible, and they all seemed to know what we were about. Father, mother, children, all came in, seated themselves very devoutly, and, though none of them were religious, manifested no little interest in the exercises. I longed to give them a word of exhortation, but my ignorance of their language forbade.

When bedtime came round, the family all retired to the kitchen, and left us to occupy the chief room—their common dwelling. The beds—two of them—were so strongly impregnated with *that* odor I declined describing, that I concluded to make a bed of my own. Brother McAlister said his nose was familiar with the perfume from long habit; and Brother Ewing, intending to transfer, determined to begin his education that night, and so they took the beds. Lovick and I spread down the buffalo-skin, and, with cushions for pillows, and cloaks for cover, and feet to the fire, slept to the break of day. Nor did I feel, thank God, that this was a hardship in the service of my Master. He "had not where to lay his head."

When we were ready for a start in the morning, I determined to try once more to get a word of English from my Choctaw friend. I said to him,

"What do I pay you?" His black eye twinkled intelligently: "*Two dollar*," said he. O, the magic of money! *It* "makes the mare go," and Indians talk—Anglo-Saxon.



LETTER VII.

ON THE ROAD—CHOCTAW AGENCY—INDIAN GATHERING—TOBLEECHUBBEE—SCHOOLS AT NEW HOPE AND FORT COFFEE—DUST—VAN BUREN, ARKANSAS—FORT SMITH—ARKANSAS CONFERENCE—MISSIONARY ANNIVERSARY—SABBATH SERVICES.

SHAKING hands with our Choctaw friends, we resumed our journey. The soil of this region is not so rich as that in the territory of the Creeks, but there are fertile spots which will repay the husbandman's toil.

We halted at noon to rest our wearied steeds, and to consume the fraction of food left us by our guest of yesterday. That we might make it the more palatable, a fire was kindled; and, for the nonce, we all became cooks, each for himself. Brother McAlister, who is full of dry, sly humor, spiced his meal by a facetious conversation with Lovick on the art of cooking, Indian fashions, and sundry little incidents of border life.

Early in the afternoon we reached Scullyville,

the Choctaw Agency. Here is quite a village—stores and private dwellings. We stopped a while, and a glance at the interior of the trading-establishments satisfied me that the merchants knew how to cater to the tastes of their customers. All the gaudiest colors known in the world of calico flash upon the eye, and are displayed in the most tempting form.

A mile or two more brought us to New Hope Academy, where we proposed to rest a day or two to examine the school and to visit the school at Fort Coffee, five miles distant. The next day the Agent of the General Government had appointed to pay over the *annuity* to the Nation. The Indians were assembled in crowds. Such a company of *men*, *squaws*, *papooses*, *ponies*, I never saw before, and likely never shall see again. There was the Christian Indian dressed like the white man; there too was the half civilized, an odd combination of the apparel of the two races, and here was the genuine man of the woods, strutting in the costume of his ancestors—hunting-shirt, buckskin leggings, moccasins, and all. I saw one magnificent-looking fellow: he had the step of a chief, the air of a king; and he moved about as if he felt himself to be the embodiment of every thing which had been the glory of an Indian. Lovick's

eyes opened wide upon the motley group, and he was highly gratified to see a few Indians, such as he had read of, in the habiliments of a warrior—face painted, scalp-lock on the crown of the head, bow and arrows swung upon the back.

At noon we had preaching. As very many could speak English, by request I preached without an interpreter. During the sermon I observed a very old man who seemed deeply interested: he wept much. When the service had ended and I had come down from the little platform, he approached me, and, seizing my hand, began in Indian and broken English to tell me how happy he was. About all I could understand was, "*Me glad; me glad heap—me glad heap;*" and this was said with streaming eyes, beaming face, and earnest gesture. The thought that God had made me an instrument of good to this old pilgrim was a cordial to my heart. I hope to meet *Toblee-chubbee* in heaven. As I was about mounting my horse, another, a young man, came to bid me "good-bye," and said something to me in his own language. I knew not what to say to him. Dickson Lewis, who was standing near, said to me, "He says he is sorry he will never see you any more." Pointing to heaven—"Tell him," said I, "we shall meet up there." He burst into tears,

wrung my hand, and went his way. May we renew our acquaintance in a better world!

The school at New Hope is for girls; the one at Fort Coffee for boys. I visited both, and was greatly interested in each establishment. This is not the place for an argument on the unity of the human race, but I am sure we all descended from a *common stock.* Kittens do not more certainly play the same antics through all their generations, than do boys and girls—no matter what their complexion—when gathered in numbers about a school-house. There are the same sorts of glee, fun, and mischief, and identical modes of manifestation, at the table, in the yard, about the school-room. I went in and heard the classes in spelling, reading, grammar, arithmetic, and geography; gave them a little speech, had prayer, and bade them farewell. These schools, well managed, will do wonders for this people in the progress of time. We must wait, and pray, and hope.

Now farewell to the Indians. They interested me as an American citizen and as a Christian minister. May this unpretending record of my visit to them interest the Church in their welfare, stir up the preachers to go and work among them, and multiply the income of the Missionary treasury, that the Board of Managers may devise

liberal things for their enlightenment and salvation!

Once more upon the road. O the dry weather! The highway is a bed of powder, so fine that a touch lifts it in clouds. I thought of a remark a distinguished Georgian once made to me in Augusta. It was a very dry season—the dust was terrible—everybody was complaining: he said to me, "I wonder that when Moses was contending with Pharaoh, he did not try him with *dust*. If he had given him such a spell as this, I think he would have 'let them go!'" However this might have been, it is certain that I never spent such a day as the one from the Nation to Van Buren, Arkansas. The next day the blessed rain came down, and the animal world breathed freely once more.

I came to this place to fill an appointment on Sabbath—preaching morning and night—and on Monday evening delivered an address for the benefit of the Crawford Institute, an institution of the Arkansas Conference. Van Buren is a flourishing little town on the bank of the Arkansas river. It is distant five miles from Fort Smith, and, since that has been abandoned as a military post, has materially interfered with its business and prosperity. We crossed and recrossed the

Arkansas river in flats and by fording, travelled along its banks, and I am satisfied that it will never be navigable any more to any great distance, except in a freshet. It is a great misfortune to the State; for without a marvellous change, it will be long years before there is any great line of rail-roads in that region.

On Tuesday, the 23d of October, we reached Fort Smith, and found lodgings at Mr. Griffith's. To him and his kind wife and mother-in-law I am indebted for as much of comfort as I ever found anywhere away from my own loved home. May God reward their kindness a hundred-fold!

In the morning of Wednesday I opened Conference in the usual way. I knew but one or two of the brethren, and of course formed to-day several new acquaintances. This Conference occupies a considerable territory, but is very feeble in the number of its workmen. They need help. If the "Iron Wheel" had half the power imputed to it, it ought to roll a score of men right off to Arkansas. And if the ministry, travelling and local, were awake to their solemn responsibilities, they would offer to go. On this topic, before I finish, I will give a separate and urgent letter.

We had a brief, smooth, pleasant session: could have wound up on Saturday night, but did not,

lest somebody might be tempted to break the Sabbath by starting for home. On Friday night we held our Missionary Anniversary. The preachers had done but little for this great interest, for the Tract cause, or the superannuated, widows and orphans, and *of course* got but little themselves. Drought—hard times—scarcity of money—these were the apologies. But I protest against the policy common in all the Conferences of turning out these great enterprises to starve by sheer neglect, because everybody is not growing rich as fast as he desires. Money can always be got for a good cause by an honest, earnest effort. Our preachers must learn to try; and if there must be a failure, let the responsibility rest on the people, where it properly belongs. But I am digressing. On this night we did far better than anybody except myself thought to be possible under the pressure of the times. One old brother went out, as he told me next day, expecting to give, as usual, *fifty cents;* "but," said he, "you made me feel so mean about it, that I actually borrowed *twenty dollars* before the meeting was over, to bring myself somewhere near my duty." He gave twenty-five dollars before the meeting was ended. He said he felt better, and meant to do better.

The services of the Sabbath were delightful.

At night we had many mourners, and several conversions and some additions to the Church. Next morning we met at sunrise to wind up, read out the appointments, and dispersed every man to his work, save one or two who remained to continue the work so auspiciously begun on the Sabbath.

LETTER VIII.

TO EL DORADO — DIFFICULTIES AHEAD — A GEORGIA FAMILY — A LATE SERVICE — HARD TRAVEL — MOUNT IDA — A NARROW ESCAPE — CADDO GAP.

Our journey now lies between Van Buren and El Dorado, Arkansas. Breakfast over, we prepared for the long travel. About ten o'clock P. M. we bade our kind friends adieu; and with Brother Harris, a preacher of the Arkansas Conference, for a travelling companion, we left for El Dorado. The people who were familiar with the route assured me that I could not reach the next Conference in time. I was told the way was lonely, rough, mountainous, almost impassable in many places. With such reports, the idea of trouble *three hundred miles* long was not very refreshing. But I have learned two simple but important lessons in my life: first, no man knows what he can accomplish till he tries: second, things are rarely or never as bad as they are represented.

Accordingly, we made the trip and had a day to spare. The road was bad enough, but I have seen worse. But I must not anticipate.

The first night we reached a house on the road-side, and found the family were emigrants from Georgia. The man of the house was absent: the lady was glad to see one who knew the acquaintances of her youth. She told me they had moved several times, but had never found any country equal to the one they had left. By some means the family found out I was a preacher. When supper was announced, we all took our seats around the table, and there we sat—silent. I did not know their habit, and did not like to volunteer to ask a blessing, and concluded that, if they wished it, they would ask me. By-and-by, a youth who seemed, in the absence of his father, to have the management of affairs, said to me, "*Make a beginning*, sir." Here was a dilemma. What does he mean? "Help yourself," or "Say grace?" The only clue to solve the mystery, was the gravity of his face. So, making his looks interpret his words, I proceeded to ask a blessing. Next morning I found that I had understood him correctly.

We started early to-day, resolved to make a long travel. The best-concerted schemes, however, are vain. We were passing through a circuit which

Brother Harris had travelled a year or two before, and, contrary to my custom, he prevailed on me to stop for dinner, and thus we lost two hours which we were compelled to make up on the following day. About sundown we reached another of his stopping-places, and although eight miles from the stand we ought to have made, we concluded to tarry. By some curious telegraphic operation, the news spread through the country around, that *the Bishop was about.* By eight o'clock a considerable company had collected. I supposed they had come to see their old friend and preacher, Brother Harris. It was a soft, balmy night, and not feeling inclined for conversation, I withdrew, and was walking up and down a long piazza, seeking rest for my cramped limbs, and was just thinking of proposing prayer and retirement, when a brother came to me and inquired if I would not give them a sermon. "What! this time of the night! Why, it is near nine o'clock now!" "Well I know," said he, "that it is an unseasonable hour, but we have but little preaching in this region—we have never heard a bishop, and the people have come on purpose; and they will be greatly disappointed if you do not talk a little for them." "Very well, get them all together, and I will try." So, planks were brought in and fixed on chairs,

and there, late at night, among the hills and woods, in that lone widow's house, to a handful of people, I made an effort to tell them the way to the kingdom.

In the morning Brother Harris had *the mumps* badly: it was raining a little and threatening a good deal, and it was thought imprudent for him to go on. My duties would not allow me to lie over, and, as he was among friends, we bade him farewell. This was the day among the mountains when, according to prediction, we were to break down, and get no farther without trouble upon trouble. And verily it was the loneliest, roughest road in some respects I ever saw. For twenty miles, I doubt if the wheels made one entire revolution on the ground. Rocks—rocks—rocks, of all sorts and sizes: mountain after mountain crossed our path, and sometimes the descent was so steep that I had to get down and swing on to the rack to keep the buggy from so running over the horses as to make them unmanageable. We were obliged to go thirty-five miles to find a house to lodge in, and were told it was a miserable place at that: by going eight miles on we would reach Mount Ida, and fare better. A little before sunset we arrived at the first stand, on the banks of the Wachita, and a slight inspection satisfied me that

no rest could be found there. So I determined to risk a night among the mountains, or reach *Mount Idea*—as the people called it. Just after fording the river we met three men, travellers, and all, as the phrase is, in liquor. As we passed, one of them sang out, "*Jordan is a hard road to travel*, a'n't it, Mister?" Knowing that they would stop at the house on the other side of the river, I rejoiced that I had gone on, and next morning had additional evidence, as will appear, that I acted wisely in so doing. A dark, cloudy night settled down upon us, full five miles from the desired haven. We began to think seriously of camping, but having nothing to feed with, mercy to our tired horses drove us on. At last a glimmering light appeared—it was moving: the rattling wheels arrested the attention of the torch-bearer, and on coming up we inquired for the town of Mount Ida, and received the welcome answer, "This is the place." With Judge Ball, the chief man of the town, we found comfortable entertainment. The country through which we had passed was high, rocky, and poor, the water clear as crystal, and yet chill and fever rages. It is an annual visitor —the people never escape. The population is thin, and live mostly by hunting. The sale of peltry furnishes them with money enough to buy

sugar, coffee, and salt, and, I guess I might add, liquor. Bear, deer, and wild turkey abound, and a hunter's life is the very highest style of living.

Before day in the morning, a woman came at half-speed into the little village, and roused nearly all the dwellers therein with her sad account of wrong and outrage. The drunken travellers we met the evening before had continued their potations after stopping for the night, and a general fight between them and the landlord and his family ensued. According to her own account, she fought like a tigress, but at last fled to save her life. She said they fired at her twice as she ran from the house to the lot. Her story produced some excitement, yet but little sympathy was felt for her misfortunes. Her own reputation for meekness and long-suffering was not well established. However, with a warrant, an officer of justice, and a few of that class who are always attracted by such scenes, she was about returning to the scene of strife when we left, congratulating ourselves that by coming on last night we escaped a household storm.

To-day it was a great relief to us and our hard-pressed steeds to find a vast improvement in the road. The geologist and mineralogist would find

much to entertain them in this region. On reaching Caddo Gap, a place somewhat famous in this part of Arkansas as having the best mill and making the best flour in all that country, we paused to admire and to speculate. Apparently, a mountain ridge once crossed this most beautiful river, but in some convulsion of nature, or by the pressure of the accumulated waters, it has been rent asunder; and now, between the precipitous cliffs there rushes a crystal flood, the motive-power of the mills below. Fine fish abound, and may be seen in the bright waters at the depth of fifteen or twenty feet. Finding a place of some reputation on the wayside, we took up early in the afternoon. The gentleman who kept the house (Major Hill) was an emigrant from Georgia, and is the only man I met in the West who rejoiced in his removal. He thought he would have done better to have moved several years earlier. His lands were fine, his house a favorite resort of travellers, his family healthy, and all about him prosperous. Indeed, he said he had made money enough. How many of my readers can say *that?* I think it likely *the Major* was mistaken: he charged half a dollar more than was common in that country; but it is due to him and his house

to say that he gave us in food and comfort the worth of our money. I commend his "stand" to the hungry and the weary who may pass that way.

LETTER IX.

A LONELY ROAD — DANGERS — LITTLE MISSOURI RIVER — A WOMAN'S EXPEDIENT — EL DORADO — WACHITA CONFERENCE — "THE FINANCES" — TRACT AND MISSIONARY MEETINGS — THE COUNTRY.

THE next morning the rain was descending in torrents, and a very bad road was made a great deal worse, so that after hard toiling we made but slow progress. The day's journey, however, with all its discomforts, being ended, we found pleasant entertainment with a Mr. Peek, near Arkadelphia. This region presents many attractions to those disposed to settle in the West. The soil is not very rich, but is productive and easy to cultivate. An abundance of timber, good water and plenty of it, nearness to market, and fair health for a new country, make it desirable for emigrants. Those who move from the older States, prefer the richest lands, despite the swamp mud and fever. A bag of cotton to the acre is an offset to all objections. "Cotton is king," not only in the world of com-

merce, but it controls plantation economy, fixes the bounds of our habitations, and compensates by promise for a life of inconvenience, labor, and hardships.

But we must pursue our journey. This day's ride I count as the dreariest, loneliest of my life. An old, forsaken, unworked road, narrow, crooked, abounding in roots, rocks, and gullies, running through a forest almost without an inhabitant—one wonders at last where he is, and whither he is going. But there is no one of whom to inquire, and echo herself is mute in these solitary wilds. We had been warned by our host of the previous night of a certain creek, (with a French name that I have forgotten,) its bottom mud, its bayous without a bottom, and its bridge without railing or plank, its rotten timbers and broken rails for flooring. Toward noon we reached it; and verily, in a rainy time, it takes a bold man to work his passage through its difficulties. Before we entered the swamp, fortunately, we saw by the wheel-tracks that some one had gone before us, or we must have guessed our route. Presently we came to a lagoon which had been causewayed, but the logs had been washed up, and were standing rather than lying, so that a passage in that direction was impossible. We could see where our forerunner

had gone in, but could not see where he went out. Going in was easy, but where to come out was a question of some importance. I dismounted and pressed through the undergrowth of cane till I found a log on which I could cross, and then, inspecting the banks, found a place where I thought an experiment might be made, perhaps. Lovick concluded he could drive over, and seemed rather anxious to try; and in he went, and down went horses, buggy, and all. The passage was short: a plunge or two brought the horses to a little firmer footing; and so we were once more, not on dry land exactly, but out of the water. That is an ugly place, try it who will. The bridge had been repaired, and was passable, but in a mile or two we had to cross the stream again, and this time to ford. We prepared for swimming, but escaped by a few inches. Our trunk was submerged, and ourselves pretty well moistened.

According to report, the worst was yet to come. The Little Missouri river was to be passed, and its bottom was four miles wide. My only apprehension was that night would overtake us, amid its mud and gloom. The mighty trees and the dense canebrake shut out the light of day long before the sun goes down. Wild beasts abound in these jungles, and the idea that a panther may spring

upon you from some overhanging bough is not very composing. We saw nothing, however, but one bear, who seemed to be content with his swamp fare. Dark night overtook us before we found a lodge in this wilderness.

Some three miles from the river, after one or two unsuccessful efforts to get in, we prevailed with a good lady to give us shelter from the rain. The family was large, and the house had but one room for us all. This is common in new countries, and I have seen the like in the old. Here we saw a scene — a show which amused Lovick no little. As it illustrates the old saying, "Necessity is the mother of invention," while it is no mean specimen of woman's wit, I will describe it. The household consisted of the elder lady, her daughter-in-law, and some seven or eight children of various ages from sixteen to two. The husband of the first and the son-in-law had gone to market and were detained by the rain. At bedtime the ladies retired to the kitchen to give us an opportunity of undressing without observation. When they supposed we were asleep, they came in. Long before day the old lady arose, made a fire, and went out. I supposed the other would do likewise, but soon found from her breathing that she was fast asleep. I roused Lovick, and

we availed ourselves of the moment to rise and dress. This done, we sat by the fire. When day had fully come, we heard a noise behind, and on turning to look, the other lady had risen, and was in the middle of the bed, a large quilt over her head, and under its concealment she was putting on her clothes; and when she came out, her toilet was complete, save that her hair needed combing. Who but a woman would have thought of such a screen? She was as perfectly hidden as to her person as if she had been within brick walls. Genuine modesty, native womanly delicacy, can always protect themselves; and in this rude cabin, in these wild woods, the sentiment was as real in that woman's heart as in her sister's of more favored fortunes. I record the little incident, not by way of ridicule, but as an item of life in a new country; a proof of female invention, and a suggestive exponent of the general truth, that there are more ways than one of doing a thing.

Rather than remain and incommode this kind family, we concluded, Sabbath as it was, to go on to Camden, hoping to reach it by the hour of morning service. In this we failed by an hour. Notice, however, was given, and I preached at night, and met with several old acquaintances. On the following day several of the preachers

on the way to Conference passed along, and a crowd of us got together at night where I had an appointment to preach. Several of us tarried with Brother Annis, himself a preacher, and member of the Conference, and in the morning quite a cavalcade took up the line of march for El Dorado.

On my arrival, the preachers were quite surprised to see me, as, knowing the route, they did not think it possible for me to get there in time. "I'll try" can do wonders, and of course an earnest, persevering effort can accomplish what is at all practicable. Brother Radcliffe, the Presiding Elder, met me on the Square—not the Masonic, but the town Square—and took me down to Col. Tatom's, at whose house I found a welcome and a home.

The Wachita Conference opened on Wednesday morning, 7th of November. The preachers were very generally present. The reports of our Church interests within their bounds were for the most part encouraging, except in relation to what are now called "the finances." Poorly paid themselves, the preachers brought up very little missionary money, and hardly any Conference collections. The apology for this deficiency was low rivers and hard times. I have no doubt the brethren honestly believed that nothing could be got by asking,

and, with sad heart and yet with good consciences, they cast anchor and longed for better days. But they were mistaken. A good cause and an earnest pleader can always raise money. Nor do "the times" make much difference. When money is scarce, almost every man feels it is not worth while to be covetous and to hoard, and he will give some of the little he has. When every thing is flush and promising, men have larger ideas, new plans, and endless ways of investing, and they feel very reluctant to give at all. At any rate, it is the duty of the preachers everywhere to bring the noble enterprises of the Church before the people—all the people—and by special effort, argument, and appeal, invoke their aid. Let all everywhere do their duty, and we shall hear no more of an empty Missionary treasury; nor will the superannuated preachers, the widows and orphans, any longer get scorpions for fish, or stones for bread.

These views were strikingly illustrated during the Conference. Dr. Hamilton, the Secretary of the Tract Society, came over, and proposed to hold a Tract meeting on Friday night. It was strongly opposed, on the ground that it would forestall and defeat the anniversary of the Missionary Society on the next evening. I took sides with the Doctor and declined to preach, to give

him a chance. The meeting was appointed in the face of remonstrance and evil prediction. Dr. Hamilton opened with such a speech as nobody but himself makes—strong, religious, eloquent. The effect was fine. I followed, and took up the collection—a little over *four hundred dollars*. "There now," said a good brother to me, "you have ruined every thing." "You did not think there was that much money in Union county, did you?" "No, I did not; but you have got it all, and to-morrow night we shall get nothing." "Hold still: do not croak. Let Hamilton and me speak, for you and the rest are afraid of the people, and we will *double the amount*." And we did. Never did I see people give more freely and cheerfully; proving that they had both the heart and the means to do liberal things. Give the people light, appeal to conscience, to their liberal feelings, and they will do well and grow better.

The whole session was a pleasant one: a gracious influence attended our private meetings and public exercises. The people were unwearied in their kindness, and when the hour of adjournment came, separation was a tax upon the feelings of all. El Dorado is a beautiful village—society agreeable, the churches in peace, the surrounding country pleasant to the eye, and the soil amply repays

cultivation. If I were a farmer, seeking a home in a new country, I should feel strongly drawn toward this section of Arkansas. In my judgment, this State is greatly underrated in the East. The people, I grant, need rousing up to a proper appreciation of their advantages. They lack enterprise, public spirit. But there are the elements and resources of a great State. A dense and flourishing population might congregate within her borders, and when her lands are occupied, and her leading men in Church and State do their duty in enlightening and directing the people, her citizens need never to be ashamed, when they travel abroad, to tell where they come from. As compared with her sisters in the Confederacy, I predict for Arkansas a glorious development and a brilliant future. The raw material abounds: let the spinners and weavers go to work and vindicate the prophecy.

LETTER X.

CAMDEN — A COLLEGE SPEECH — OFF TO TEXAS — SIGNS FOR SELECTING A LODGING — A CLEAN HOUSE — FEATHER-BEDS — HEROIC FEAT — "THE WILDERNESS" — MINDEN, LA. — CROSS-ROADS.

On coming through Camden, I had promised, if the Conference adjourned in time to allow it, to return and make a speech in behalf of a female college to be located at that place. Accordingly, after the closing services on Monday, I made haste to dine and to take backward steps for forty miles, to serve what I regard an important Church interest.

Brother Bustin, an old Georgia man, had bound me by promise to stay at his house on Monday night, and to preach at the church near by. I was weary with business and labor, and needed a night's repose for the refreshment of mind and body. But the people seemed anxious to hear the word, and, despite fatigue, I mounted a horse and rode to the church, and found, in the effort to preach, a special blessing. In a life of change and

toil, I have often proved that when I taxed myself, put myself to trouble to serve God and do good, then I realized the deepest, most enduring consolations. That night's service profited me—whether others were helped I know not. The DAY will declare it.

Many of the preachers accompanied me to Camden; and after tea I found a large congregation assembled in the church to hear an argument for the college. As nothing had been done in this region for denominational education, and as very few believed that any thing could be done, I belabored my theme, and pressed the people to instant action, for two hours or more. We raised about seven thousand dollars, I believe; and when I left next morning, some active friends were trying to increase the amount. They thought they could carry the subscription up to twelve thousand in the town and country. I hope they may succeed. Methodism cannot do her duty in this great country without seeking to promote and sanctify education.

On Wednesday, the 14th of November, we went home with Brother Moores, one of the presiding elders of the Conference, and the next day set out direct for Texas. Pine woods, bad road, and solitariness, made this a long, tedious day. We had

been directed to stop at a certain house as the only place where lodging could be got within any reasonable distance. Late in the afternoon, in the midst of a terrible swamp, we met a traveller on horseback. "How far is it," said I, "to Mr. ——'s?" "About three miles." After we had passed, he turned in his saddle and called to me: "Do you think of staying there to-night?" "Yes, sir." "Well, I stopped there once, and never wish to do it again. There is a house just this side, a new settlement. I know not who lives there, but I would advise you to get in there if you can: I know you cannot be worsted." "Thank you, sir, I'll try the new place."

When we reached it, concluding to reconnoitre a little, I asked for a drink of water. A servant woman brought me some in a nice clean cocoa-nut. "Well," said I, "this is one good sign."

Pardon a little digression. I have noticed many things in travelling, and some indications, small in themselves, decide me very often in choosing a resting-place. The house may be very humble; but if the yard is clean, well swept, rose-bushes and shrubbery about, a vine over the door, a flower-pot on the window-sill, get down and walk in, if they will let you, and they generally will; you may be sure that every thing will be neat and

clean. But a white house on the roadside, with every thing around out of fix, avoid as you would the small-pox. No comfort there—dirt, dirt—on the floor, in the bed, the table-cloth, the butter, the biscuit—everywhere and every thing.

"The goodman of the house" was out on his farm, and his wife was reluctant to take us in; she said they were "not fixed: had just settled there." I told her I had heard of the place below, and did not like to go there. She laughed and said, "People do complain of the fare down there; but I do not like to take anybody's money without giving them the worth of it." I liked that sentiment, and I put it alongside of that clean gourd, and renewed my applications. At last she said we might stay; but, "You must wait on yourselves; yonder is the horse-lot, and there is the corn and fodder; and when you get through, take your trunk into that cabin out there—that is the only chance." Very well, the work is done, and now for the cabin. As we stepped in, Lovick said, "Father, we have hit it exactly." The Shunammite did no better for the prophet. Clean floor, clean bed, white towels, a bucket of water, shining tin pan, every thing in order; not fine, but free from dirt, white and clean. "Cleanliness is next to godliness," said Mr. Wesley. I believe it. *To*

live in filth is a sin. A pure thought in some houses is almost an impossibility. There is something wrong in *the best people*, who live *slovenly*. There is no defence of it, no excuse for it. Laziness and dirt go together. I wish the Church were free from both. For the life of me, I cannot respect an habitually dirty man or a slatternly woman. The plain truth is, I do not try much. But at Brother Smith's—for the family were Methodists—mind and body both had rest. There was nothing to offend the senses or the taste. A plain, poor, humble man, he lived like a Christian gentleman. With nothing of what is called furniture—fifty dollars would have bought every chair, bed, bedstead, all the crockery, every thing about the house—I ask no better entertainment in the way of food or place to sleep, except that I prefer a mattress to a feather-bed, winter and summer—all the time, for myself, my family, my friends, and my foes. The true origin of spinal diseases, nervous disorders, headaches, languor, and debility, in many cases—nay, in most—*is feather-beds.* I wish I had them all in one place, and were at liberty to do my will upon them; I would make a bonfire, far more purifying than "Jayne's Liver Pills," and more restorative to feeble constitutions than all the empiric nostrums

puffed in a thousand papers. But hold! your "gray goose-quill" has forgotten its errand and is wandering. Not much out of the way, after all. I hope to see the day when the *feathered* goose will be allowed to keep her plumage, or shed it only in the natural way; and the *unfeathered* geese, who have so long been robbing the first with violent hands, will consider the laws of nature, and grow too wise to sleep on *downy* beds.

My worthy host was quite delighted with a heroic feat of a son of his, about ten years old, a few days before our arrival. The little fellow had gone down on a neighboring creek with his shot-gun to hunt squirrels. While wandering alone in the woods, a huge bear, gaunt and hungry, attacked him: the brave boy, instead of running, stood still till the furious beast got within a few feet of him, and then with deliberate aim shot him. The bear fell; but rose and retreated a little way; the boy reloaded, and marched up and slew him with a second shot. The skin was preserved as a trophy of the son's courage and skill.

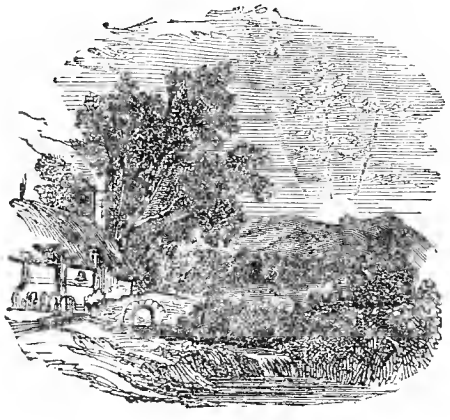
The following day we passed through what is called "the Wilderness." The region deserves its name: wild, solitary, without a settler, the timid deer will hardly flee at your approach. It is the very place that Cowper longed for; but "the *lodge*"

is not there. *That* must be built by the recluse after his arrival. A little before nightfall we reached Mrs. Harper's, a widow and a Methodist. Bereaved of husband and several childen, she is afflicted indeed; yet our Heavenly Father has mingled many alleviations in her cup of bitterness. She has good hope in the death of the departed, and her own faith is strong and full of consolation.

The next day, (Saturday,) I had an appointment to preach at Minden, Louisiana. In the morning it was raining, and having a hilly, heavy road, I had hard work to reach the place in time; but succeeded in getting there before the people dispersed. The congregation was good, and the service pleasant—I hope profitable. Here I saw several familiar faces, and shook hands with some old friends. How delightful these greetings are, far from home, among strangers!

But the day's work is not done. Eighteen miles more must be passed in order to reach Cross-Roads by eleven o'clock to-morrow, where another appointment awaits me. Brother Lawrence, a local preacher, wishing to be ordained next day, has come to guide me to his house. Brother Randle, the Presiding Elder of the district, kindly accompanies me. Before dark, we arrived, after a

"Gilpin" drive, at Brother Lawrence's hospitable mansion. On the Sabbath I met a large and intelligent-looking audience, and preached to them on the great plan of recovering mercy. I went home with Brother Carraway, near the church, and spent the afternoon and night.



LETTER XI.

LOUISIANA—RED RIVER BOTTOM—SHREVEPORT—IMPROVEMENTS—GREENWOOD—THE CIRCUS—IN TEXAS.

NORTH LOUISIANA is an interesting country in many respects. Much of it along our route is broken—far more so than I expected; and even the more flat and level portions are sufficiently undulating for drainage. The citizens say it is healthy. A stranger, however, while looking at the marshy bottoms and the dull, sluggish streams, would come to a different conclusion. It is very productive, especially in cotton. Corn too does well, but wheat is a very rare and uncertain crop.

At the time of my visit, the low rivers had made biscuit scarce. Men of wealth were unable to procure flour. Indeed, the want of navigation through all this region over which we have been passing since we left Missouri, had put the common necessaries of life, especially *salt*, at fabulous prices. This indispensable article had been selling

at from twelve to twenty-five dollars a bushel. High seasoning, that!

Descending a long hill, at the base of which there *lies*, rather than runs, a stream, (here called a bayou,) we struck Red River Bottom. As we trotted down the hill aforesaid, I observed that there was a ferry across the bayou. The flat was on our side, and without noticing whether it was fastened to the bank, I drove in. When the buggy wheels struck it, away it went. A diligent application of the whip made the horses jerk in the vehicle, and by the time we were all in, and the ferryman, by a violent leap, had overtaken us, we were fairly over the deep, dark, narrow stream. On driving out, I turned and asked, "How much do I pay?"

"One dollar," was the answer.

"What! a dollar for crossing this little bayou, and ferrying myself?"

"Well, you ought not to have driven in till I told you: besides, there is a bridge three miles from here, and I take toll for that too."

The bridge ahead was something like a reason for the enormous charge; so I left my dollar and moved on.

I feel thankful that it was my good fortune to cross this famous bottom in a dry time. From the

bayou to the river is eight miles. We did our best, and got through in three hours and a half. The mud is a perfect cement—a sort of clay bitumen, glutinous, pitchy; cleaving to man and beast and carriage, and making every step of your progress labor and travail. But O, how rich! What plantations might be laid out here, if overflows could be prevented! The nearer the river, the higher the ground; and here vast cotton-fields have been opened, and such cotton-stalks I never saw before. They grow up like saplings, branching from the ground, and laden with bolls. When I thought of the little *Tom Thumb* weeds of Carolina and Georgia, I felt sorry for the men who spend their lives in making cotton on clay-banks and sand-hills. However, these Red River planters do not make and save more than one crop in five. The casualties of the location make strongly against them; but such is the amazing fertility of the soil, that they grow rich, I learn, very fast, despite their disadvantages. The passion for "the great staple" and its gains must be very strong in a man's heart to settle him down in these regions of mud and floods, of disease and death. Money is the great power in America, and the free-born citizens of the Great Republic are the people to make and save it.

Crossing the river, we drove into Shreveport, a town very favorably located for business. It had been my plan to spend the Sabbath here, but I was forestalled by the appointment at the Cross-Roads.

After inquiring the way to Marshall, we drove through; and as we had been told to follow the telegraphic wires, we found no difficulty in sticking to the right track. The posts and wires seemed like old acquaintances, after our long sojourn amid prairies and woods; and they indicated, too, that we had returned to the highways of a progressive people. But this is a new country; and although the citizens have availed themselves of the electric news-carrier, yonder comes a relic of the past—a primitive medium of transportation — a cotton-wagon drawn by oxen. For forty miles we were rarely out of sight of these clumsy vehicles and their slow-moving teams. But their days are numbered: one more season of toil, and the patient ox will rarely travel beyond his owner's broad acres, and the cumbrous wagon will stand still in its shed. There upon the right is an embankment, and just ahead an excavation. These footprints of the engineer are the forerunners of an iron track, the iron horse—his speed and his burden. When once the steam-whistle wakes the echoes of these woods and vales, and the country commands all

the facilities of a well-managed railroad, emigration from the East will receive a new impetus, and capital and intelligence will work new wonders in the West.

We reached Greenwood, a little village not far from the line of Texas, about sundown, and, driving up to a fair-looking hotel, alighted. A young man, who seemed to have the management in his hands, approached me with an embarrassed air, and said that the Circus Company had filled his house, and unless I could consent to lodge in a room with some of the crowd, he could not take me in. "Excuse me, if you please," said I: "I will go on, and risk entertainment upon the road." This Circus seemed to haunt me. I taxed my wearied horses with a longer travel than usual to get rid of their company; but they reached Marshall almost as soon as I did; and on going to Henderson a few days after, I found them again. I guess, however, they grew as tired of me as I did of them; for at each place, except the first, I had an appointment coincident with their hour of performance; and each time, according to report, the multitude rallied to the pulpit rather than to the play. But when there is nothing to divert public attention, what crowds of the giddy and thoughtless—ay, of old people too—nay,

(Heaven pity us!) of Church members also, these mountebanks, with their calico horses, gather about them! Alas for good taste, social refinement, intellectual resources, and moral principle, where these strolling vagabonds find patronage!

We found a resting-place some two miles from the village. Even here, however, some late incomers from the show disturbed our slumbers, and made us wish we had gone farther. Morning came at last, and we made ready to enter Texas. Our introduction to this Mecca of the emigrant was not signalized by any thing but our disappointment. The land was not so rich, the face of the country was more hilly than I had expected; and, to my surprise, I saw in the fields, on either hand, galled spots, numerous gullies, old sedge-grass, and other signs of waste and decay. But this is not *Texas* yet. Even here, on the border, the soil is fine—a remarkable mixture of clay and sand, easy to cultivate, and, with good seasons, very productive.

Early in the afternoon of Tuesday, November 20th, we reached Marshall, the seat of the East Texas Conference, and took lodgings, according to arrangements, with Brother Frazer. This is a good place to rest, and so I drop the pen for the present.

LETTER XII.

MARSHALL, TEXAS—EAST TEXAS CONFERENCE—REVIVALS AT CONFERENCE — OLD ACQUAINTANCES — THE SABINE RIVER—PROPERTIES OF THE WATER—TRAVELLING AND PREACHING—AN EFFORT AT SINGING.

MARSHALL is an interesting town. There is about it much of the beautiful and picturesque. The plateau on which it is situated is itself quite an elevation, while around are eminences crowned with tasteful private residences. The people are intelligent, social, and public-spirited, hospitable and generous on a noble scale. I was delighted with them, and felt while there, and still feel, an attraction toward them, almost strong enough to move me from the "old red hills of Georgia." Indeed, they proposed, if I would come, to make my fortune—a thing I never could do for myself. I record the proposition as a specimen of their kindness, and as one of those outgushings of affection and good-will which takes from the labor of the

itinerant its burden, and makes exile from home a sacrifice to be borne without complaint. I have never asked any favors, have declined some, never had many offered; but in the providence of God our Saviour's promise to those who "leave all to follow him" has been virtually fulfilled to me; and my observation is, that those who go forward, trusting his gracious word, are never confounded, neither left nor forsaken.

The East Texas Conference is not a large body, but it is an effective one. The preachers are not afraid of work or sacrifices. They neither expect nor receive much, but seem to have made up their minds to labor in the Lord's vineyard, and leave their wages to be settled by the Master, when he shall say, "Call the laborers, and give them their hire." The business of the Conference was most harmoniously dispatched; the Tract Cause and the Missionary interests most liberally supported; the ministry of the word was quick and powerful, and a blessed revival lent its aid to cheer the preachers and bless the community. By the way, amid all the signs of the degeneracy and the causes of discouragement, about which we hear and read so much, is it not a hopeful symptom that revivals are far more frequent at Annual Conferences than formerly? I never saw any thing of the sort, and

rarely heard of one, till within the last two or three years. My judgment is, that our Conference sessions are more religious and spiritual than they were twenty years ago. And when it is remembered that business has been greatly augmented and diversified in the last few years, I can but regard the improved piety of these occasions as a cheering fact, and a conservative element in the history of the Church.

During my stay in this place, I had the pleasure of meeting many Georgia acquaintances; among the rest, my old friend, William Pinckney Hill. Associated most kindly in boyhood and early youth, we had not seen each other for twenty-three years. An emigrant to Texas, while yet it was an infant republic, he has lived amid its revolutions and changes; and by talent, professional industry, honor, integrity, and high-toned moral deportment, he has won a proud position among his fellow-citizens, and made himself a name that any man might covet. The renewal of our intercourse, under all its circumstances and results, constitutes an epoch in our history, and will live in the memory of each, while life endures. Perhaps in heaven we may discuss it as one of the providences by which our Heavenly Father works out his gracious purposes. May God bless him, his wife,

his sons and daughters, and, as members of the Church on earth, prepare them for the worship of the New Jerusalem!

Harrison county, in which Marshall is located, seems to have been the favorite retreat of the Georgia emigrants. Here I met my old Hancock neighbors, Abner Cook and John Harris. Their familiar faces made me feel at home. But, alas! this is a world of thorns as well as roses. Lights and shadows strangely mingle. While yet I grasped the friendly hand of the first, and rejoiced to see his face once more, he informed me that his wife was dying of consumption. Poor man! well might he weep—and weep he did—for few men have been blessed with the companionship of such a woman. For consistent, deep, spiritual, intelligent piety, I have never known her superior. It was beautiful to sit by her couch—all pallid and wasted as she was—and mark her meekness and patience; to listen to her words of hope and confidence, and hear her tell how grace had overcome the long, hard struggles of natural affection, and made her willing, if such were the will of God, to say farewell to her husband, and look for the last time on the faces of her little ones. In her chamber, where the sands of her precious life were running low, one's sympathy with the affecting

family scene was bereaved of its sadness by the placid, well-assured bliss of the doomed sufferer. She seemed so ripe for heaven, that when you thought of the sorrows of earth, you could not ask that she might tarry longer here. In a few weeks after Conference, she breathed her last. The memory of her virtues consecrates her grave, and this brief tribute is the offering of one who knew her well, and hopes to meet her again, not amid sickness and tears, but where there are fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore.

But I must leave this place, endeared to me by old friendships made new, by enlarged Christian acquaintances, by precious sanctuary services, by revival scenes and enjoyments, and by one more blessed exemplification of the power of our holy religion to comfort and to save. On Tuesday, the 29th of November, the Conference closed in the usual way, and the preachers all prepared to depart for new fields of toil, and I hope of triumph too. Having sold my travelling-apparatus, I was thrown on my friends for the mode of conveyance to the several appointments which had been made for me on the route to Galveston. My good *old-new* friend, Hill, harnessed a noble team to his rockaway, and took me to the first and second appointments, and sent me to the third.

Leaving Marshall on Wednesday, we travelled through a very hilly, piney-woods country to the Sabine river, and on its banks I saw some *Texas* lands. There is a tradition out there that if a man drinks Sabine water, something will stick to him to which he has no legal right. The ferryman told this story to a stranger once, as they were crossing the stream. He knelt down, took a hearty draught, and when they got over, he mounted his horse and rode off. The ferryman hailed him and said, "Have you not forgotten something, sir?" The man looked carefully about his person and his saddle, and said, "No, I believe not." "You have not paid your toll." "No; nor do I intend to. I drank of the Sabine river;" and away he went, making the legend true for once.

About sunset we halted at a brother's house near Bethesda, where I was to preach that night. The church was small, but the congregation large. The lights were few and dim. The people looked to me like dusky shadows, and I never feel well in preaching where I cannot see. I need light—terrestrial and celestial. On the morrow we went to Henderson. The court was in session, but adjourned for preaching at eleven o'clock. Here there was light from the sky, and from Him that

rules above. I felt the Divine presence, and trust that good was done. We stayed with Sister McCarthy, who, as soon as she saw me, seemed so overwhelmed with emotion that she could not speak when I was introduced to her. Recovering herself, she begged me to excuse her; saying I was so much like a son she had recently lost, that she could not control her feelings. What a little thing may revive our grief, making "the electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound," vibrate most painfully!

Brother Gillespie was our travelling companion the next day, and on the route we picked up Brother Angell, who left us the day before to preach at Salem. The region through which we were passing very much resembles middle Georgia and upper Carolina in soil, and the growth upon it. We reached Rusk, the county-seat of Cherokee, in a storm of wind, rain, and hail. The Methodists, contrary to their usual custom of building upon the outskirts, had located their church in the centre of the town. Despite the wind and weather, the house was lighted; the people assembled, and I tried to preach. Here Brother Hobbes met us with horse and buggy to take us to another stage of our journey. A two days' meeting had been given out at Shiloh, about

twenty miles distant, and on Saturday morning (the next day) we set out—quite a troop—Gillespie, Angell, Hobbes, Shanks, and Lovick and I. We left the highway, and if I were to say, took the woods, it would be no great exaggeration. We reached the place a little behind time, but the people were waiting, and I preached once more, and made an appointment for Brother Gillespie at night. Next day, Sunday, I preached again, and for variety's sake must say a little about the singing. After prayer, I gave out a short metre hymn. A brother who had been leading the music, raised a common-metre tune. Thinking to relieve him, I announced the metre again. He tried the second time, and failed. Seeing that he was embarrassed, I remarked, "We will omit singing," and commenced giving out my text. When I had stated book, chapter, and verse, another brother, apparently resolved upon a song, tried his voice upon a tune. He missed badly. Supposing that he had not heard me, I said a little louder, "We will omit singing," and again was telling where my text might be found, when, to everybody's amusement, and nearly to the overthrow of my gravity, a *third* man lifted his voice, and the sound "sprangled" among notes generally, without specifying any. The privilege of laughing would have been a

relief, but that would have been a rare preface to a sermon, and so, holding my muscles to the right place by a stern will, I proceeded with the text and the discourse. It was a good time.

LETTER XIII.

MOVING FORWARD—FACE OF THE COUNTRY—"MINE HOST"—ON TRAINING CHILDREN—THE MAN WHO HAD SEEN A BISHOP—EXHORTATION TO OUR EDITORS—WORKING WITH THE BAPTISTS AT MOSCOW.

LEAVING the house of Brother Box, where we had been lodging for two days, we set out for the next appointment. The ride on Monday took us through a wilderness. Habitations were few and far enough apart to allow what these Western people all want—a range of cattle. Much of the land over which we travelled would, in the old States, be considered valuable. Here it is considered very moderate. It is well timbered—mostly pine, and partly oak—and I fancy fine for cotton. Water is scarce, and when found is not much of a luxury. We crossed the Neches, a stream very narrow but very deep. If the flat-boat had been three feet longer, it would have been a bridge—new style, but very safe. Late in the evening we reached a small but rich prairie, and found in it

several settlements. This was the last chance for entertainment for many a long mile, and so we put up.

Our host was a Methodist, and seemed to be a man of substance; but every thing about his premises was at loose ends. He carries out the free-and-easy style of a new country fully. His wants are few, and the mode of supply is not very material. His house was as near no house as it could be for a house at all. It was about half covered: the doors had no shutters, and the ventilation from all quarters was perfect. There were twelve children in the establishment. After supper a while it was amusing to look round upon the little fellows, as they lay in every direction before the fire—on chests, on the floor, fast asleep. As the room in which we sat was to be the bedchamber of the four guests, at bedtime there was a wonderful picking up of the scattered tribe, and neither father nor mother seemed to know when they had found all, till they had been counted.

When the family had all retired to an outhouse, it became our turn to fix. The main thing—for the night was cold—was to close the door. Brother Gillespie's ample Texas blanket served our purpose very well, and with sundry comments on the various styles of living, mixed with some

grumblings about the discomforts around us, we slept—at least I did—till the break of day. In the morning, I felt it to be my duty to hint to my brother some improvements on his mode of living. It very soon appeared, however, that, in his own conceit, he understood the subject far better than I. At any rate, he had his notions, and they were fixed. He said that children ought not to be washed or have their clothes changed more than once a week: that the children who were combed, and washed, and dressed every day, were always pale and sickly, of no account. Leave them to paddle in the mud-holes with the geese and the pigs: dirt was wholesome, and so on. I thought it was time for me to back out; and so I told him I would give him credit for being very consistent: he carried out his theory exactly, and I could not deny that his children looked very healthy. But I will say, that I still prefer a cleaner theory, and practice too. Occasionally in my life I have had some fond but careless mother to tell a dirty, unwashed little fellow "to kiss Uncle Pierce;" but Uncle P. always declines such favors. A clean, well-governed child is the angel of the household. I love such, in cabins or palaces, no matter which. But some Christian people have not read Solomon on family discipline to

much profit. O for a reformation as universal as the evil!

During the next day we found the country more inhabited, and a decided improvement of the quality of the land. Some creek bottoms, high and dry, and, judging from the banks of the streams, about fifteen or twenty feet deep in soil, would move some people I wot of, if they could get it as it was offered to me, at two dollars per acre. Some man was clearing up about one hundred acres of it on the roadside. I should like to see the corn in July.

We reached Sumter, a little straggling, piney-woods town, before night, and stopped to preach. We had to use the Campbellite Church, the only one in the place. I occupied the pulpit, as usual. The congregation was good and attentive, and I hope some good seed was sown. Service over, we dispersed; all for a while going the same direction. The night was very dark, and conversation free. One fellow, who seemed to have his preconceived notions wonderfully upset, spoke out as though he were soliloquizing: "Well, that is a Bishop: I have often heerd of 'em, but never seed one before. Why, he is nothing but a man, after all! He talks like other people; in fact, he preaches like Mr. Z——." Brother Angell,

who enjoys a joke, and likes to make the most of it, told me that Mr. Z—— was considered a tolerable exhorter, but about the poorest preacher in Texas. There, now: the charm of episcopacy in one man's heart is dissolved for ever! It is doubtful whether he expected to see a rhinoceros or an angel: certainly something *infra* or *super* human. At any rate, my prestige as something *extra* is gone with that Sumter man: perhaps with more than one, though the old Campbellite preacher expressed his thanks for the sermon. To the orthodox, that might be considered a very equivocal compliment. Well, I cannot help it. I am telling things just as they occurred.

As I wish to do good in these letters, I will pause in my story, to drop a hint to the editorial fraternity of the Advocate family. Brother Gillespie, on going from Galveston to Marshall, had a series of appointments, where he preached and presented the claims of the Texas Advocate. On his return with me, he concluded every service with a brief speech, and opened his book for patronage. Going and coming, he obtained four hundred subscribers. This plan is wise; the policy is good in more respects than one. I recommend it to all the brethren. Two or three months every year spent in visiting the people, would largely promote our publishing

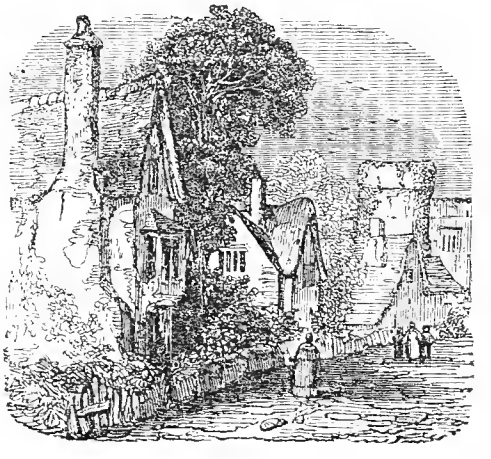
interests. Let the editors come into personal contact with the people; represent the interest they manage; diffuse their ministry a little; show the Church that they can preach, and do preach, as well as they write; and by labor, sympathy, and service, identify themselves and their paper more directly with the masses, and the effect will be a quadrupled circulation. Neither the preachers nor the people ever see these editorial knights of the quill, except when they come down to Conference to settle up. Show yourselves, brethren. Let Mac of Nashville, with his beaming face, and strong social impulses; Mac of New Orleans, with his pithy sayings and steady fervor of spirit; Mac of St. Louis, with his deep, earnest, bustling energy; Gillespie, with his calm, condensed, inexhaustible enthusiasm; Lee, of Richmond, with his quiet, courtly, reverential manner; Myers, of Charleston, with his indomitable will and ready plans; one and all, now and then, leave the city dust for the country air; see the people, talk with them, pray in their families, preach at their meeting-houses, and subscribers will multiply by the thousand. The labors of these brethren, scattered over the land, would tell upon every interest of our Zion. Our connectional bonds would strengthen; the evil of withdrawing so many of

our strong men from the regular work would be greatly abated, and the Church would feel that in making a man an editor, we had not taken him out of the pulpit, or stationed him in *one* charge for ten or twenty years. Nay, on this plan, his very position would give the Church in his district of Conferences more general access to his talents and services. Circulate, brethren, circulate. Locate the press, but itinerate the pulpit. Keep the pen moving, but do not let the tongue stagnate. Stir the types; send out the weekly sheet full of the gospel truth and religious news; but let the *people see you personally, hear you, feel you,* as ministers of the Lord Jesus.

Brother Hobbes, who had very kindly brought us to Rusk, here surrendered his charge, and turned us over to Brother Kavanaugh, who volunteered to take us the rest of the journey. I shall not soon forget the kindness of these beloved brethren. They gave more than a cup of cold water. The Lord reward them a hundred-fold!

Brother Gillespie left us at this point, and took the direct road to Galveston. I had four other appointments yet to meet, and we "parted asunder," without a quarrel, however, and in good-humor. Brother Sanson had come over to take us by his house for dinner, on our way to Moscow.

He took us through the woods "for short," fed us high, and went with us to preaching at night at the little town with the big name. Here I found several Baptist ministers conducting a revival. They gave way to me courteously. I preached to the people, and joined them in the altar work. It was a time of tears. May the harvest be ready for the sickle!



LETTER XIV.

GALVESTON — HOMEWARD BOUND — NEW ORLEANS — LAKE PONCHARTRAIN — IN A FOG — MOBILE — UP THE RIVER — DRINKING, SMOKING, AND GAMING — MONTGOMERY — RAILROADS.

GALVESTON, the "city of cottages," is a charming place. Open to the winds on every side, with wide streets and sandy soil, and a soft and balmy climate, it is eligibly located for a great and flourishing mart. Orange and lemon trees are found in almost every garden. They grow luxuriantly, and were laden with fruit when I was there in December last. The oleander is the common ornamental shrub in the town. It flourishes even along the sidewalks. The plantain, too, with its clustering fruit, is successfully cultivated. What the temperature may be in summer, I know not; but a visitor in winter would conclude that the good people had the productions of the tropics, without the accompanying fervor of a tropical climate. It is well-

nigh impossible to conceive of a finer beach than the one around Galveston. An evening ride on these surf-beaten sands is a delightful recreation. The beautiful and the sublime, nature and art, the works of God and the inventions of men, combine in panoramic order. The island, with its human habitations; the Gulf, with its ever-heaving waters; the steamship, bannered with smoke, proudly defying wind and wave; the sea-birds, with tireless wing fanning the air, or descending to ride upon the billows; the merry voices of the gay and the glad, as they gather shells upon the shore, mingling with the everlasting roar of the tide in its ebb and its flow, constitute a scene where one may well pause to think and feel, to admire and adore.

Galveston cannot be a sickly place, unless it be by the criminal carelessness of the city authorities, or the bad habits of the people. Yellow-fever certainly cannot originate there, and if it prevail at all, it must be by importation. When Texas shall count her citizens by the million, and communication with the interior by railroads shall be opened, this city on the Gulf of Mexico will become an emporium of wealth and commerce.

On the 30th of December, we left on board the Mexico, bound for New Orleans. As soon as the boat began to rock, Lovick, though greatly excited

by the novelty of every thing around him, and watching with eager eye the various water-fowls that followed the vessel, shared the fate of most voyagers upon the deep. Resisting with all his might, sea-sickness subdued him in two or three hours, and no wonder of the sea could rouse him to interest again. He kept his berth to the mouth of the Mississippi, save when he rose to pay his tribute to Neptune. To us who kept well, the voyage was pleasant; but some of the passengers suffered terribly. An old lady who had been put under my charge was sick, apparently "nigh unto death." But by a kind Providence we all came safe to land, "without loss of the ship or of any man's life."

We reached New Orleans on Saturday before noon, passing up the river for at least three miles between steamboats, sloops, brigs, and ships. To an untravelled landlubber, there seemed to be vessels enough to do the carrying of all the world and "the rest of mankind."

We tarried in New Orleans but a few hours, and, expecting in the order of duty to visit it ere long, I devoted my brief time to one or two friends whom I met at the hotel.

In the forenoon we took the Lake Ponchartrain Railroad, four miles long, to the Lake itself, where we went on board the steamer Florida. for Mobile.

How different this placid sheet of water from the muddy Mississippi, or the restless Gulf! The boat was clean, well kept, the company quiet and agreeable; and so after supper we lay down for a good night's rest, expecting to be in Mobile by breakfast time.

But the best-concerted schemes are vain, and all human hopes fallacious. On this very night began the long, wet, cold, freezing, snowy winter, the longest and the severest ever known in the South. A fog came down so dense that nothing but itself was visible. It was amusing to hear the steam-whistles as they shrieked through the darkness; each vessel warning the other of its presence, and seeming to say, "Don't run into me," or, "Take care of yourself: I'm a coming." It was like a congregation of owls hooting to one another in a swamp at midnight.

We were delayed several hours, and did not reach Mobile till eleven o'clock — too late for preaching. Withal, the rain was pouring down, and shut us up for the day. So passed my first Sabbath in Mobile. Denied the privilege of preaching, I consumed the afternoon in reading and meditation, and retired early, that I might be refreshed for the renewal of my journey homeward on the morrow. In the morning it was raining

still, and having to wait till late in the afternoon for a boat to Montgomery, we were once more thrown upon our own resources for employment. We were stopping at the "Battle House," a first-class hotel—I have seen no better anywhere—and, amid the crowd which thronged its dining-hall and public rooms, I began to look around for some familiar face. Very soon I recognized one and another. In the intervals of the showers we sallied out to see the town, and met several old Georgia friends, whose importunities to tarry we found it hard to resist. But four months' absence from home, almost without a letter, settled all these applications.

In the afternoon, nearly night, the William Jones raised *her* steam or *his* steam, (as the reader pleases —the name is masculine, and the thing named feminine gender,) and we were off for Montgomery.

The river was booming—the current strong. It was Christmas eve: we had many "darkies" aboard, going to see their friends, and to spend the holidays, and we were stopping at every plantation. High waters, heavy freights, and passengers, white or black, for every landing, made travelling very slow to one impatient to get home. For a fast age, I rather think it was slow motion anyhow. The weather grew intensely cold, and

we were all shut up in the cabin, doomed to sit around a red-hot stove, and wear away the dull days and nights as best we could. Having read all the books I had along, as is common with me in a crowd, I was "swift to hear, and slow to speak." On this occasion, as often before, I was struck with the utter emptiness of the general talk of mankind. In the multitude of words, how few thoughts! How inane and vapid the ideas of men in their common conversation! I should think less of it, if they did not seem to enjoy it. But with what gusto a man will sometimes say *nothing!* With what zest and passion and imprecations men will jabber about the veriest trifles! Man, I suppose, is a rational creature, but he deserves this distinctive title rather from the possession than the exercise of reason. In the main, we are foolish—very—in taste, talk, and action.

Several of the passengers, wearied with themselves and with one another, sought relief in cards. Having escaped this sight on the Cumberland, the Mississippi, the Missouri, the Gulf and the Lake, I was very sorry to see it on the Alabama. But these young men played and drank well-nigh half the trip. Every game was finished by a resort to the bar, where the losing party *treated* the rest to a dram and a cigar. All well *drenched* and well *fired*,

they would return to the table, play another game, and then for the bottle once more. They seemed "mighty to mingle strong drink," for none of them grew drunk. I am afraid they were used to it. In dress and manners they seemed to be well-bred, but I cannot help thinking that there is a most ominous obliquity of principle in any young man whose wickedness emboldens him to swear and drink and gamble, or to do either, unembarrassed, in the presence of strangers, gray heads, and reverend ministers.

We reached Montgomery between midnight and day. The whole town seemed wrapped in slumber too deep to be pierced by the engine's whistle. The captain of the boat dispatched messenger after messenger to notify the omnibus-drivers that there were loads of passengers at the wharf. The boat was going on to Wetumpka, and we had to go ashore and stand in the bleak night-wind, on the frozen bank, waiting to hear the rumbling wheels along the silent street. But we waited in vain. At last, finding a negro who promised to stand guard over our baggage, we went afoot to the city. The drowsy drivers were finally aroused to their duty. A warm fire and a cold breakfast prefaced our departure from the hotel to the rail-road dépôt.

I should cheerfully resign all my interest, as a traveller, in horses, buggies, and steamboats, to be assured on every route of a railroad. It is a grand invention. A pyramid is a regal toy compared with this modern contrivance for getting along. I trust that all which have been built will last for ever; that all in progress will go on to completion; that those which have been talked about will become realities, and that thousands more will be projected and finished. Success to them all! Highways of travel and commerce, they facilitate intercourse, enrich the country, save time, and enable a man to see as much—to go as far in a few months—as in the ordinary lifetime of our grandfathers. What a boon to a man who has been long from home! How swiftly they bear him on his way! The iron horse seems to sympathize with his impatience, and, breathing smoke and fire, bounds along his destined track as though he were glad to confer a favor. I acknowledge my indebtedness for his help on many a weary journey.

LETTER XV.

LEAVING MONTGOMERY — PASSENGER PUT OVERBOARD — WALKING ON CROSS-TIES — IN GEORGIA ONCE MORE — OBSTACLES — AT HOME.

We left Montgomery about daybreak for Opelika. The rains had been heavy, the weather was intensely cold, the road rather out of order, yet our speed was respectable.

When day was fully come, the conductor came round, examining tickets and collecting passage-money. Two seats before me sat a man, well dressed and rather grave-looking. He offered money which was declined; he then refused to pay till he should reach West Point. His idea seemed to be, that change of place would improve the *currency* of his bills. The conductor insisted on immediate payment — the man stubbornly refused. He was informed that he must pay or he would be *put out*. He sneered at the threat, and said he knew how to defend himself. We all expected a

fight, perhaps a little blood-letting. The man acted so foolishly, and the conductor was so clearly but doing his duty, that no one interfered by word or deed. The train was stopped, and the scuffle began. The conductor was overmatched in strength. He could not tear the fellow loose from his seat. Grasping the arm of his seat, he held on, offering no other resistance. Aid was summoned from another car, and the alliance was too strong for the rebellious passenger. He was torn from his moorings, dragged to the door, and very unceremoniously hurled down an embankment. Quickly rising, he faced his foe and rushed for the platform. By the time he was fairly on the road, the train was in motion, and his only chance was to seize the rear platform of the hindmost car: this he did, and was struggling to get on the now rapidly-moving train, when the conductor saw him. Rushing to him, by sundry stamps upon his fingers and kicks upon his person, he succeeded in detaching the man from his hold, and, unfortunately for the poor fellow, he fell just as the cars were passing a bridge in the middle of a long embankment: he dropped out of sight, and we saw him no more. The man's anxiety to get rid of a doubtful bill made him a fool. He had money, gold and silver and paper, and yet insisted on get-

ting off his spurious bills. I hope his reflections under the bridge will make him a wiser man.

All along the route to-day we had rumors of land-slides, broken engines, and cars overturned; and very soon we had ocular evidence of the truth of these statements. We found a noble engine on the way broken down and capsized; and on reaching Opelika, the train from Columbus then due had not arrived. After waiting a long time, the passengers prevailed on the conductor to send us on. Nearly a mile from the Chattahoochee we were brought to a full stop by the caving in of the road. The train which ought to have met us at Opelika was there, the engine buried in mud and dirt—no chance to pass. Now we must walk three miles round, by Girard, to Columbus, or foot it over the unfinished bridge by stepping from cross-tie to cross-tie, for a very considerable distance at either end. The middle was planked over. I determined to risk the latter. The river was swollen, rushing and foaming below, and the wind blowing a gale above. I confess I did not like the experiment. Most of the passengers declined it, preferring to wait till an omnibus could come round for them. My chief fear was for Lovick, but he thought he could venture it; and so, with one other, we took up the line of march. To direct

my son's mind and my own from the real dangers of the passage, (a misstep would have plunged us into the river,) I commenced a cheerful conversation about home and the friends we were soon to see. We landed safely, but a little weak about the knees. I cannot recommend walking over long, high bridges on cross-ties. Better wait for the omnibus.

As we stepped from the bridge on the ground, we "shook hands in our hearts" with old Georgia. A very decided home-feeling came over us. A brief walk brought us to the house of my brother-in-law, Mr. Gambrill, and there I found my venerable father, two sisters, and other friends. How pleasant these interviews after long separation! Without the occasional salutations of kinsfolk, how lonely life would be! Thank God for home sympathy and friends!

As a filial duty, and to gratify my own long-cherished affections, we tarried till the next day noon. We left Columbus on Friday afternoon, cheered with the hope of reaching home on Saturday night. The long, hard rains had disarranged all the roads, and made travelling comparatively slow: the ordinary speed was dangerous. Nevertheless, we reached Macon in due season, and were then within sixty miles of home. Here we

learned that the Oconee river was impassable, and that we could not go through on the direct route. Disappointed, but not desponding, we took the train for Atlanta, resolving to go one hundred and thirty miles rather than not reach the end of the sixty. Reaching Atlanta, we took the Georgia road for Double Wells, expecting there to find the stage. On our arrival, to our dismay, we learned that the schedule had been changed, and that the stage would not leave till morning. There was but one more chance to carry out our plan of reaching home that night. So, mounting the cars once more, we set out for Warrenton, where we proposed to hire a conveyance. In due course of events we reached Warrenton. Seventeen miles more to travel—the rain falling—roads bad—sun down—but we must go. Now for the livery-stable. Alas! our troubles are not over yet. The horses were all hired out, and the only locomotives we could procure were a pair of pony-mules, not much bigger than a good Newfoundland dog, and not much faster than a yoke of steers. By the time we geared up ready for travel, the evening shades were on us, thickened by a cloudy sky and a misty rain. But we know the road, and can drive in the dark. The driver takes his seat, and off we move. One and another cried out as we

passed along the street, "You cannot get home to-night: the creeks are swimming, and the bridge at the river is covered with water." I had crossed these streams many a time when they were very full, and concluded to try them again. On we went, by dint of jerks and shouts, and sprouts cut by the wayside, at the rate of two miles and a half per hour. The first, second, and third creeks were passed in safety, though with difficulty. The fourth and the worst was to come. Before we reached it we heard it was swimming from side to side, and that a man essaying to cross had narrowly escaped drowning. Still, on we went. By and by we came within sound of the rushing waters, and although it was too dark to see much, I was very well satisfied our little team could never navigate that roaring flood. On land a mule has a way of his own; but in water he will not obey his driver, and has not sense enough to choose for himself. He is a poor panic-stricken beast, and gives himself up to his fate. With good horses I should have tried to cross, but with Balaam and Balak I declined, and yielded to the doom I had labored to avoid. To lodge within ten or twelve miles of home was quite a trial; but there was no alternative. We spent a very comfortable night with Dr. Lynch, in spite of our dis-

appointment. It seemed a little strange that all the troubles of so long a trip should have been gathered about its close; but when I remembered how we had been favored with health and weather, had travelled by land and water four thousand miles and more, without accident or injury, I felt that we had neither right nor reason to complain. Nevertheless, if I had been called on, I think I could have made a stirring speech in favor of a railroad from Warrenton by Sparta to Macon. With the belief that this road would be built, I chose my home, but begin to think I shall be forced to change "Sunshine"* for "Shadydale," or some other more accessible place.

Early next morning we set out to reach home, and relieve the anxiety of those who watched for our coming the last night. The light revealed the fact that we acted wisely in not braving the flood. We should have been swamped in the swollen waters. Our team, refreshed by a night's repose, and urged by the appliances for such cases made and provided, trotted along right merrily, and ere long our glad eyes looked upon loved faces and scenes familiar. We were at home. Virgin lands, unfelled forests, rolling prairies, all have their

* The name of Bishop Pierce's residence in Georgia.—[EDITOR.

charms; but the old fields, the well-known roads, and even the red hills, endeared by long association and consecrated by toil and self-denial, are to me dearer still. As a man, I should never move to a new country for the sake of gain: as a preacher, I may, from a sense of duty and for the sake of usefulness.

LETTER XVI.

END OF THE FIRST TOUR—THOUGHTS ON EMIGRATION TO THE WEST—APPEAL TO LOCAL PREACHERS.

My last letter brought me back to my starting-point; and now, to those who have followed me in my wanderings, it will not be amiss to close with a few reflections. Besides the intrinsic fitness of such a conclusion, I am prompted by the express desire of some friends to give my notions of emigration to the West. To the Southern Atlantic States, this is a question of vital interest, not only as it may affect the private fortunes of individuals, but as it may determine the position of the South in the Union. Population is vastly important to us, in view of our numerical strength in the popular branch of Congress, and in the Electoral College. And it is a singular feature of the institution of slavery, that the very prosperity of the country, so far at least as the rural districts are concerned, diminishes white population, by an inevitable law, under the present economy of

things. More negroes, more land; and so the rich buy out the poor, and the poor retreat to richer and cheaper regions, to reënact, in their turn, the same ruinous operation. It would be well if the leading minds of the country could be set on the projection of some scheme to neutralize the prevailing tendency—a tendency which, while it enlarges plantations, and increases the production of cotton, is converting once populous white settlements into mere negro-quarters.

Under the present system of industrial pursuits and agricultural labor, emigration is necessary—inevitable. The evil is not remediless, if the people could be brought to look ahead, and to act wisely. Direct importation would enlarge our cities; manufactories would locate capital and give employment to the poor; an improved husbandry would counteract the present fatal policy, and enrich and adorn the country; and all would operate to settle and multiply the people. The change in agriculture is very desirable, might be easily effected, and would be remunerative. But we are a blind, hasty, restless race; and the hope of reform is exceedingly faint. To abate the rage for change of place, and to help those to act understandingly who *now think* they must go, I will also show mine opinion.

First, I will state two striking facts. In a long travel through Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas, and in free conversation with almost all I met, I found but *one* who was glad he had moved. *Many* were very sorry, and nearly all were restless and anxious to move again. Secondly: the general testimony is, that moving is expensive, hazardous, and seldom pays. I was very much struck with the *unsettledness* of the people. One great change seems to have unhinged them for life. Feverish, dissatisfied, persuaded they could do better by another trial, nearly everybody was willing to sell out and go farther. This, I take it, is a very unhappy state of mind, unfortunate for character and fatal to improvement. I met quite as many moving from Texas as moving to it. This, however, is not the fault of the country. Most of these *back-comers* belong to that class who waste life in hunting for a place where people can *live without work.* Disappointed in their wild calculations, they bring up an evil report of the land. Overtaking a perfect caravan of movers one day, I addressed myself to an old man and said,

"Going to Texas?"

"*That's the idee,*" he responded.

"Where do you mean to settle?"

"On the Colorado, a *leetle* above Austin."

"Have you ever been there?"

"No; but they tell me that is the country, and I am going to see."

Now that old man had very vivid *idees* of that region, and very likely will rue the day he left Tennessee. My observation is, if a man wants to get rid of all home feelings, and to exhaust life in dreamy plans, vague hopes, and wandering desires, let him break up and be off; the recipe seldom fails.

Lands in the States I mentioned are rich, cheap, and abundant; the scenery diversified, often beautiful, picturesque, enchanting. I wondered, admired, almost coveted; and contrasting soil, scenery, and production with the bald, monotonous, exhausted regions of the older portions of Georgia and the Carolinas, I ceased to marvel at those who seek a new country. The temptation is strong to those who till the ground. But make the most of all these things, (and they can hardly be exaggerated,) there are many offsets and drawbacks for the present. One permanent objection is the water—generally scarce, most commonly bad, seldom tolerably fair. Chills and fever abound: they are incidental, and will pass away when the forests are felled and the country opened. Markets are distant—almost inaccessible, save when

there is a freshet in the rivers. House-building, if one aspires to any thing better than a log-cabin, is difficult and expensive. Saw-mills are scarce, and lumber hard to get. Many of the facilities and comforts of an old country are wanting; and, on the whole, this is my conclusion: For those just setting out in life, without speedy and very material changes in the old States, it may be well to move, if they will take time and locate judiciously. *The old ought never to move.* I leave them out. As to the middle-aged, this is about the truth: If they are willing to sacrifice their *personal convenience* and *enjoyments* for the sake of their *children* and *grandchildren*, let them move. *They* will lose by the operation, but their descendants will, in all likelihood, be improved in fortune and outward circumstances. To make these sacrifices is sometimes a duty, and to all under this obligation I say, Go and see for yourself. You can find rich lands and clever people in any of these States, and places enough in market to give you ample room for choice. As a native citizen of Georgia, I would prefer that you should *improve* your *old* lands, build good houses, commodious churches and academies, and seek your graves at last in the valleys where your fathers sleep. Nevertheless, I shall not be surprised if you bend your steps

toward the setting sun, and sleep finally in the bosom of a Western prairie.

Before I quit, a word or two to my brethren in the ministry, especially the local brethren. The Annual Conferences are rarely full, and fields of labor are multiplying from various causes even here; so that the itinerant ranks can never supply the wants of the West without making a vacuum in the East. This state of things gives rise to a very serious question: as to you, my local brethren, I ask your attention to it. That many of you ought to separate yourselves from all worldly cares and studies, and to give yourselves wholly to the work of God, I have no doubt. How you ever took your ordination vows, without intending to do it as soon as possible, I do not understand. But I will not press this point now. I refer to it to rouse your mind to inquiry, and to incline you to seek a more promising field of action.

In the old Conferences there are circuits within the bounds of which reside from *ten* to *twenty* local preachers; frequently more preachers than appointments: they are in each other's way. Taking it for granted that every man, moved by the Holy Ghost to enter the ministry, wishes to work all he can, (he is mistaken in his call if he does not,) let me ask, is it right for such a man voluntarily to

remain where he is superseded by the necessities of the case? There is not room for all. Some must be idle, while others work; or, if rotation be adopted, then *all* are sometimes *idle*—not from choice, but necessity. In the Sabbath congregations of the circuit preacher, there are sometimes a half dozen local brethren, with the vows of God upon them to preach the word, unemployed, save as hearers. In view of the wants of the Church and the world, is this ministerial? If people perish for lack of knowledge, while you *choose* to live where you can do nothing for them, can you be innocent?

It may be a tax, an inconvenience, very unpleasant to your natural feelings, to leave your homestead, family, friends, and associations; but to us all on this subject, the language of Jesus Christ is strong, stern, imperative. We must "leave all and follow him." If we subordinate the great commission to our tastes, affections, and worldly interests, we not only unscripturally modify our ministerial obligations, but impair the great principle of personal consecration. We live below the gospel standard, both as preachers and as Christians. If we would be holy and useful, we must deny ourselves and take up our cross. Now, with regard to many of you, it is true that there are more needy

places than where you live. In those circuits where you are too thick to work, much less to thrive, there ought to be a thinning out for your own sakes—for the sake of the Church. In the language of the Discipline, we ought to go where we are most needed, and especially where the probabilities of usefulness are the strongest. We owe this to our Lord and Master, and to the souls for whom he died. In the West, there is room for you—you are needed: many places are waste, unoccupied for lack of laborers. This is true of the Indian Mission Conference, of the Arkansas, the Wachita, the East Texas and Texas Conferences. I make no suggestion as to which you should go, brethren. You will find enough to do in any; nor do I say a word here as to whether you should *travel* or remain *local*. On this point, each must decide for himself: to our own Master we stand or fall. If you decline to join the Conference in Arkansas or Texas either, you may find eligible homes, fertile land, good society, and a sphere of action far more promising than where you now reside. In these States, the Church is extending, houses of worship are rising, colleges are projecting, schools are multiplying, railroads are being located, and most of the inconveniences of a new country are passing away. The sacrifices—if I may use such a word

about a preacher—are trifling, after all. With the blessing of Providence, a man may do well for himself and family by the change. I do not, however, recommend it on the score of *temporal* advantage. The desire of gain when duly limited is legitimate. Commonly, it needs no incitement. I shall not appeal to it. I exhort the brethren to go on higher grounds. If it should turn out that your ministerial duty and earthly advantage harmonize, I shall be glad; but even if you should lose for the kingdom of heaven's sake, be it so: still I say, go. To save souls, a man may well afford to sink money. Go—burning with the desire to do good: serve your generation according to the will of God: then you may charge all your losses to the Saviour's account. Usefulness here and heaven hereafter will make and keep you rich for ever.

LETTER XVII.

ANOTHER TOUR—CONFERENCE INTERESTS MUTUAL—METHODISM ALIKE EVERYWHERE—REASONS FOR WRITING—FIRST STAGES OF THE JOURNEY—NASHVILLE—THE CUMBERLAND—LOUISVILLE.

HAVING promised to jot down a few "incidents of Western travel," which occurred on my tour in the year 1856, I begin the allotted task in the present letter; hoping, by simple narrative and reflection, to promote various interests of our beloved Church.

Methodism is "a peculiar institution," and its connectional bonds, if not vital to it, are at least important to its efficiency as an organization. Stretching, as our Church does, over a vast territory and a diversified population, any thing, every thing is valuable which gives information in detail of the action and fortunes of distant Conferences, and so contributes to interest each section in the history of every other. The diffusion of knowledge—a knowledge of each other—is important to the unity of the Church. It will beget sympathy,

affection, bring about coöperation, and give impetus to all our great enterprises. The people ought to know what the Episcopacy is about, what the several Conferences are doing; the location, condition, and results of our missions; and, indeed, every thing that characterizes our policy and its issues. I do not believe in Church secrets. Let the people know what is wanted, and why; what is doing, and how. One in doctrine, discipline, economy, let us learn to know and to love each other, so that if one member suffers, all the rest may suffer with it. If Methodism prospers in Missouri, let Virginia thrill with the tidings: if the prairies of Kansas blaze with religious fervor, let the mountains of Tennessee clap their hands: if the missions of South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama multiply in members and in membership, let Kentucky shout her thanksgiving: if Arkansas comes up from the wilderness, fair as the sun, let the old North State rejoice and be exceeding glad: if Texas goes on from grace to grace, waxes stronger and stronger, let Mississippi and Florida glory in her rising star, and let each Conference provoke every other to love and to good works.

In visiting Conferences where I was an entire stranger, I have often felt exhilarated by the *home-feeling* that comes over me as soon as business be-

gins. Far, very far from my native Conference, yet I hear the old familiar phrases, progress in the same order, feel the same spirit pervading all, mingle in the house of God in the same simple service, and realize that Methodism is everywhere a living, spiritual organism, flexible enough to adapt itself to every form of society, and yet, without the compromise of her doctrines or her economy, aggressive enough to multiply her conquests and to extend her borders, without weakening herself in her old domain; and, in all places, a genial, expansive, warm-hearted system, moulding thought and character on the best pattern of Christian experience and gospel achievement. However some may malign and persecute her, and whatever her real faults, (and I do not claim perfection for her,) the mission of Methodism is grand—sublime. Her world-wide plans, generous sympathies, catholic doctrines; her disdain of difficulties and love of enterprise; her heroic pioneers, and self-sacrificing ministry, and ever-growing membership, all attest her providential origin, progress, and destiny. I like Athens, and Antioch, and Corinth, and Rome; but Jerusalem—*our Jerusalem*—most of all. Peace be within her walls, and prosperity within her palaces!

These letters are written with the hope that

they may increase the connectional feeling, interest those in the bounds of their circulation in behalf of the more distant Conferences, and, by narrative, incident, reflection, and appeal, illustrate the workings of Methodism, show the labors and trials of its agents, and help, by the blessing of God, to rouse ministers and members to more self-denial, liberality, and devotion.

It is a singular fact, in relation to the human mind, that what we dread while it is anticipated, and suffer under while enduring it, nevertheless, in the *memory* of it, becomes a source of pleasure. Hence soldiers, sailors, and travellers love to relate the accidents of field and flood, highway and lonely path, swimming stream and dark defile; the hair-breadth escapes, the toil and suffering of march and voyage. Go where they may, these talkers find ready listeners, and, if they write a decent story, will always find eager readers. In this age of locomotion, when there is not only along the highway of nations "here and there a traveller," but a perfect caravan of wanderers, and consequently of books, sketches, and letters without end, the world's appetite still cries, "*More!* MORE!" Children, young people, "old folks at home," all like to hear and to read. Without stopping to explain the tastes of mankind in this respect, the

philosophy of the feeling, so far as the actors are concerned, is easy to understand. When at the call of duty or patriotism, or even from the love of adventure, one has triumphed over distance and danger, fear and fatigue, a very pleasant self-complacency ensues. The man has a better opinion (and with reason, too) of himself—his manliness, his muscles, his will and courage. He who has overcome difficulty, braved danger, endured suffering in a righteous cause, has an element of enjoyment, a sort of private luxury, to which the timid sluggards, dainty and nervous, are utter strangers.

Now, I have nothing very strange to tell, certainly do not mean to magnify myself, and yet I confess to pleasure in the recollection that I have, as a man and a preacher, proved my faith by my works, sustained my principles by my practice, and have done what I believe and teach others ought to do. To leave a home a man loves—his wife in tears, his children loth to let him go—four months of long travel and work before him—is no small tax upon one's natural feelings. Before the time to start shall have arrived, the thought of it will come to cast its shadow upon the brightness of the passing hour; and when he is gone, the long days and weary nights will hang heavy upon his hands, save as work and pleasant company may

beguile his absence and loneliness; and then aching bones, the weariness of long rides, and all the discomforts of misnamed "entertainment" on the roadside, will make him long, now and then, for the comforts of his own quiet fireside, and the sweetest music of earth—the voices of those we love, all mingling in welcome, inquiry, and congratulation. By and by the trip is made, the work is done; and at home and at rest, he forgets his sorrows, "as waters that pass away."

On the 28th of August, 1856, I left home for Kansas. The old hack which runs daily back and forth from Sparta to Cumming, was fortunately out of order, and a very clever little carriage, rather the worse for wear, had been substituted. "Parson Brown" and his compeer, worn down with service and full of honors, had retired from the "Line," and Mr. R., the driver, gloried in another team. Of their speed and bottom I say nothing, except that I arrived in time to take the night train up the Georgia Railroad. It was my plan to stop and preach the next day (the Sabbath) in Madison. In the morning, however, an equinoctial storm was in full blast. The rains descended, the winds raged all the day, and amid the war of elements the church-going bell was still. The night was tempestuous, and so I remained till the following day.

My nephew and namesake—whose ambition to travel had been roused by Lovick's stories of the former trip—by his father's consent, concluded to go with me.

The route to Nashville is too familiar for description. Without any accident or incident, we reached that point in due course of mail. We stopped with my old friend and brother, the Rev. J. E. Evans, who, whatever his dislike for the mercantile drudgery of the Publishing House, has managed his own finances so well as, in conjunction with his better half, to make the bed and board of himself and friends *very* comfortable. The Cumberland, despite my former eulogy, I found very low — too low for navigation. Dr. Green, who sticks to what he says, insisted that I might go down on some little craft, the name of which I have forgotten, but everybody else said, "Take the stage to Louisville." The truth then must be told — the Cumberland does become "Goose Creek" in *very* dry weather. At such a time, however, the Ohio nearly ceases to run, and the Father of Waters uncovers many a sandbank. With undiminished respect for its general capacity, and only slightly abated confidence in its volume and depth, I hope it will rise high enough and keep up long enough to carry off many

steamboat loads of Methodist literature for Western distribution.

Ten passengers and two hundred miles of staging—starting at two o'clock in the morning! But the road is macadamized, and there is no other way to reach Kansas Conference in time. Come, George, wake up! we must go.

On the second day, about dark, and in a heavy shower, we drove up to the Galt House in Louisville. This is a well-kept establishment—table, bed, rooms, all good. I rested soundly, and George, whose excitement had kept him awake pretty much since we left Georgia, here "caved in," and slept profoundly. The circumstances of our arrival—the fatigue, the darkness, the rain—all forbade visiting, and so I did not call on any of the brethren. When the morning dawned, I was struck with the growth and improvement of the city. I had not seen it since the Convention of 1845. It will compare well with any Western city—in some things it exceeds them all.

LETTER XVIII.

TO INDIANAPOLIS — CONFUSION — AN ELECTION — TERRE HAUTE—PROGRESS—A DISTILLERY—ILLINOIS—ST. LOUIS, AND THENCE TO JEFFERSON CITY.

Rising early on the morning of the 3d of September, we took the omnibus, and, crossing the Ohio in a ferry-boat, soon reached the dépôt of the Jeffersonville and Indianapolis Railroad. The cars were full, and the rush of the iron horse was but a type of the spirit which seemed to move the people. Business, pleasure, politics — each had representatives in the mixed multitude. We soon reached Indianapolis, the capital of Indiana, and the centre of her railroads.

Eight roads diverge from this point; and the traveller has use for both eyes, and must needs show his kinship with the great Yankee nation, by asking sundry questions, or he may find himself on the wrong train: on this day the confusion was great, and is no less, perhaps, any other day. The

engine whistles, the caterers for the city hotels, the porters, the hackdrivers, the agents of rival routes, all take part in the noise and bewilderment. It is Babel without its terror, or Bedlam without its maniacs. Everybody seems to understand his business, and to have a single eye to his interest; and the best way to escape from the *tormentors*, is to find out what you wish to do, and go right at it, as though you were blind and deaf to all beside. With some experience in such scenes, and somewhat gifted in getting through a crowd, I nevertheless found myself without a seat in a train of eight cars. My trunk—an important article on a long trip—seemed as if it would never come forth from its hiding-place, and my care to see it safely transferred involved me in no little discomfort for a time. One of the employees of the road, by and by, came to my relief, for which I *looked* my thanks. He did not give me time to express the gratitude I felt. Another came by ere long and informed me that those seats were reserved for ladies, and that I must move. To him I *looked* "No;" and as he waited for an answer, I informed him that I would move when I saw a lady without a seat, and not till then, unless he would provide me with another. He promised to do so, but I saw him no more.

Our trip to-day was enlivened by an election. It

excited as much interest as though the issue really involved the destiny of the nation. Men, women, children, were all eager to learn the result, and received the report with sad or beaming faces, according to their partialities. These elections were common on all the public routes, by land and water; and it is a little strange that, however they might indicate individual preference, they were exponents of public sentiment in hardly a single instance. Many of these reports found their way into the papers, and became the basis of the most delusive calculations, and were appealed to as data by which to regulate bets and to stimulate party zeal. Why these *straws* did *not* show which way the wind blew, I shall leave these political philosophers to settle, as best they can.

We dined at Terre Haute. The house in which we ate was an extempore affair, but "mine host" provided well for his numerous guests, and by his fare and his politeness earned his half-dollar from each.

It is unfair to make up an opinion of a State, its soil, or its people, by what one sees along the line of any of its great thoroughfares. The curious gazers or the active workers about dépôts are not specimens, even of the masses. They are not examples of either the manners or the morals of

the community to which they belong. Much, however, meets the eye, to indicate the general character of the country and its inhabitants. From the visible signs, I should consider Indiana in progress of rapid development. Her people seem busy and enterprising: villages and factories of various kinds abound. Within ten miles I counted seven embryo towns—places with a name; and each struggling for recognition in the next edition of American Geography. The style of building shows that the people are "progressive." Modern fashions prevail. Here and there some *old fogy* defies the order of the day, and builds as his grandfather used to build.

I am sorry to say that I saw on the line a large *whisky distillery*, where the precious grain of the earth, which God intended to be *food* for man and beast, is converted into liquid poison, and then *casked* and *barrelled* for a sort of itinerant destruction of men. *These drink and perish.* The swine, I learned—indeed, I saw—fare better. They are fattened by thousands on the *swill* of the establishment. The sight of the pens is enough to disgust one with hogs and whisky too. It is said that the odors, in a hot day, *load* the surrounding atmosphere, and *taint* the air for *miles.* Those who live and work on the premises must be—what shall I

call them?—martyrs, suicides, or pirates? Or are they a nondescript compound of all the three? I *saw* more, *smelt* more than was pleasant, in passing at the rate of twenty miles an hour.

The "Hoosier" State is not equal to the land of the "Suckers" for fertility of soil. Illinois contains as much rich farming-land as any State in the Union, I judge, unless Missouri be the exception. I have seen rather more of the latter, and would give it the premium with the lights before me. A more extensive observation of Illinois might alter my opinion. The country is beautiful in scenery. Prairies which are perfect plains, and forests of the finest timber, and soil rich, deep, enduring, make it a very desirable farming region, and will fill it after a while with a population as dense as that of China. Night came upon us in the midst of a vast prairie; and as darkness and sleep cut off observation, we will roll quietly along by the way of Alton, to the dépôt on the great Mississippi opposite St. Louis.

At two A. M. we arrive. The omnibus is ready —all aboard—over the ferry—in St. Louis. We stop at the Planter's House, and find every room full. Weary, sleepy, what shall we do till morning light appears? "Is the sitting-room occupied?" "No." Away we go. Ah! here is a settee.

With cloak and overcoat for pillow and covering, I laid me down to sleep. George tied a couple of chairs together with his handkerchief, and found a position, after many experiments, to suit him—a kind of half-recumbent, half-hanging position—and we heard no more of him till sunrise. Breakfast over, we sallied out to see the city, and called upon some friends. The preachers were gone, some to camp-meeting, some to distant appointments; and so, after visiting the Advocate Office, and looking over the papers, we prepared to leave for Kansas. Dining early, we hastened to the cars of the Pacific Railroad, and took tickets for Jefferson City. I described this road in a former letter, and will not repeat. I will only add, that since the fatal accident, last October a year ago, so far as prudent management and painstaking oversight are concerned, it may now, despite its apparent dangers, be considered as safe as any other.

We reached the city about dark, and immediately went aboard one of the packets which run daily, in connection with the railroad, to all points up the Mississippi river as high as St. Joseph. From this point matters of more interest will pass before us.

LETTER XIX.

TO KANSAS—AN INFORMAL SERVICE—KANSAS RUMORS—IMAGINARY DANGERS—GOVERNOR GEARY—GOVERNOR SHANNON—THE "BORDER RUFFIANS"—KANSAS CITY—DESCRIPTION THEREOF.

WHEN we took the steam packet at Jefferson City on Saturday night, it was my purpose to stop and preach at Boonville. The river, however, was low, and though the boats kept moving up and down, none of them could calculate their time exactly. When they would strike, how long they would stick, no man could tell. After many inquiries, and at the request of the captain and passengers, I concluded to move on and preach upon the boat. The service was informal as to its order. We had no singing. I can sometimes *start* a tune, and, if others will join me, can hold on to it and carry it through the hymn; but without aid, I am apt to indulge in a little variety—mixing the metres, contrary to science and all the recognized standards. Having no helper, I declined any ex-

periment. Reading the Scriptures, prayer and preaching made up the service. I addressed the irreligious, and pressed the importance of immediate decision and personal conversion. The emotion of my own spirit and seriousness of my audience, with the tears of some, inspired the hope that eternity will reveal fruit, as the result of that day's sowing.

We had aboard Governor Geary and his Secretary, and a committee appointed by a public meeting in St. Louis to visit Kansas and report the real state of affairs, with some other officials of the General Government and of the Territory. Of course, Kansas and its troubles were the topics of hourly conversation. Before leaving home, and on the route, I had read all the stories of wrong and outrage, blood and death, which had been published to inflame the country and make capital for the political speculators. In such a struggle I knew that partisan reports were not to be relied on, and that rumors grew as they travelled; and with a mind open to receive the truth, I listened to those who claimed to know all about the soil, the people, the parties, the battles, the plans for the future. If I had been perplexed by what I read, I was confounded by what I heard. The thread of history became more knotty and tangled. The nearer I

came to the scene of action, the more doubtful, contradictory, and uncertain was all I heard. The honest did not know what was true, and the designing manufactured to order. There was no limit to tales but the power of invention; and the public mind, excited and exasperated, was credulous to weakness. The most fabulous account found ready listeners and believers. If I had been like-minded, the Kansas Mission Conference would not have met, or at least would have been without a bishop.

One man, who seemed to know everybody out there, and to be posted in the history of the past and the prophecy of the future, besought me most earnestly not to put my foot ashore: said the idea of holding a Conference anywhere in the Territory was an absurdity—downright madness—an utter impossibility; that my life would be in danger every step I took; and this he said with emphasis, for he verily believed it. When I told him my route and plan of travel, he pronounced it the very worst I could take: he knew every foot of it: there was more timber, deeper, darker *thickets* than anywhere else, and in his imagination there was a rifle and a marauder behind every bush. I said to him, "My friend, you are scared, excited."

"No, sir, I speak the truth; and if you go on,

you will find it as I tell you. You are not safe, except with a large company, well armed."

"Very well, I shall try it without company save my little nephew, and without gun, or pistol, or knife."

With a look which seemed to say, "You are a fool," he said he had given me "fair warning in kindness and truth. You can go, but you will hold no Conference, and most likely will never see home again." When the time came for us to part, he bade me farewell very kindly and renewed his admonition.

Governor Geary is a tall, good-looking man, without any very striking feature, of easy manners, pleasant in conversation; and he seemed to have very just views of his duties and responsibilities. He impressed me very favorably. At several towns on the river, as we ascended, he was called out to make a speech, and essayed the task, but did not succeed very well. His talent does not run that way. He is a man of plain, strong common sense; talks fluently and intelligently: has travelled—held office—is decided—has a strong will—thinks for himself, and will command respect and maintain authority anywhere. His appointment was opportune; and if he had been the first governor instead of the last, less blood would have

been shed, and the "freedom-shriekers" would have had more patriotic employment.

When we reached Glasgow, we found a boat at the landing and a crowd upon the bluff. Governor Shannon was in the boat, returning from Kansas. Governor Geary sent for him. They had an interview, and Governor Shannon's report was indeed alarming, if it had not been apparent that he himself was panic-stricken. He had tried to conciliate when he ought to have punished—to harmonize belligerent factions, when he ought to have stood firmly upon the law—until the elements of strife waxed into war, and he, powerless and without authority or influence, was driven from his post. He informed Governor Geary that every road in the Territory was strewed with the dying and the dead; and his opinion seemed to be, that there could be no arbiter but the sword, and no peace but by the annihilation of one of the parties. A man of peace, he was not fitted for the emergency. All—friends and foes—agree that he desired to do his duty, but lacked nerve for the crisis.

Here a company of Missourians came on our boat, *en route* for Kansas and the war. They were armed for slaughter—guns in their hands, pistols by their sides, bowie-knives in their bosoms. With courage equal to their resources, they would

have made a desperate fight. Having read many hard things of the "Border Ruffians," I determined to mingle with them, get their ideas, learn their spirit, and find out what manner of men they were. Let me premise: this company of near a hundred men were a fair specimen of those who have gone from Missouri to take part in the territorial strife. They were generally plain, humble, honest farmers, or young men from the country, called out, as they thought, by a great public necessity. They were not adventurers, seeking land or notoriety. Much less were they propagandists, seeking to force an obnoxious institution upon an unwilling people. They proclaimed themselves the friends of law and order, offered their services to Governor Geary in upholding legitimate authority, and declared they would not fire a gun, nor strike a blow, save under the order of those whose business it was to command. On a crowded boat, with every thing in the hourly tidings from Kansas to excite them, they behaved themselves with propriety. They were quiet, polite, orderly. There was no drunkenness, no obscenity, no ribald song, no profanity. Governor Geary, who *had* certainly thought that the name "*Border Ruffian*" was descriptive—at least meant something not very complimentary to character, manners, or spirit—

expressed himself to me as surprised and gratified with what he saw and heard. He felt that his work would be easier, his difficulties less than he had expected. It could not be much of a task to govern such men. Further observation confirmed the good opinion I formed of them, and satisfied me that whatever may have been the outrages of *individual* desperadoes, the *organized* bands of Missouri had been grossly slandered, both as to their intentions and their acts. Exasperated by numberless provocations, some imprudences were committed, I doubt not; but after acquainting myself on the spot with the opinions and temper and wishes of her people, if Missouri needed an advocate before the country, I would volunteer in her defence. The truth of history will be her vindication and her eulogy.

As far as I can, without mixing myself with parties and politics, in the progress of these letters, I shall give a faithful account of what I saw, heard, and thought in this disputed territory. Very likely, it will appear that if the South loses Kansas, she will be more to blame than those (with all their faults—I may add crimes) who have warred upon her institutions.

Some time after midnight we reached Kansas City, a thrifty town near the mouth of Kansas

river, but in the State of Missouri. Here the volunteers also landed, and immediately set about their preparations for marching in the morning. George and I retreated to the hotel, and, after long delay, succeeded in obtaining a bed.

The site of Kansas City is about the last place where a common man would have thought of locating a city. Perpendicular hills — hills oval — hills ragged — long slopes — abrupt ascents, with ravines and gorges, deep or yawning wide in wild confusion — all seemed to forbid house-building thereabout. But it is a good point for trade; and so Mammon — or Anglo-Saxon energy, or American enterprise, just as you please — has dug and levelled and built. The houses fronting the river are reared against the bluff, with its summit far above the roof; and in the rear end, and even in the third story, you have the earthy odor peculiar to a newly dug cellar. Yet, with all its *ups and downs*, trade flourishes, and the city grows.

LETTER XX.

FROM KANSAS CITY TO WESTPORT—FACE OF THE COUNTRY—BUSTLING TIMES—AN ACQUAINTANCE—BLACK CARPET-BAGS—A SHARPE'S RIFLE—SHAWNEE MISSION—A RICH FARM—A RIDE—THE QUAKER MISSION—ATCHISON'S CAMP—THE CLIMATE.

RETIRING just before day, we slept till breakfast. Soon after, the hack, which runs daily to Westport, called at the door for passengers. We took our seats, and departed to run the gauntlet of which my steamboat friend had notified me. Not so much from courage as from downright unbelief, we rode along with perfect composure, making observations on men and things in general. The country is broken, but rich and heavily timbered; the soil deep, dark, and capable of producing any agricultural product adapted to the climate. The cattle—of the finest stock and the best of their kind—keep fat on blue-grass and clover, and, compared with our Southern *runts*, make a Southern man feel like coming home and slaying his *pony* herds.

The settlement of Kansas—the Emigration and the Immigration—soldiers and travellers—have made a harvest for the dwellers on the wayside. On this day every thing seemed to be astir. Equestrians and pedestrians lined the road, and the counter-currents indicated that the points of attraction were very different. Some were fleeing from strife, others rushing into it. The signs of something afoot grew thicker as we approached Westport, and on our arrival we found the streets full and all in motion: market-carts, camp-wagons, soldiers, citizens, oxen, horses, white people, Indians—a motley group, a mixed crowd. The men were looking and talking in groups as if there were some grave business on hand. An entire stranger, I walked about and mused upon the scene before me. Presently a man in camp-costume, and armed (as an old acquaintance of mine used to say) "in a cap-a-pie *point of view*," stepped up, and, to my surprise, called me by name, and said: "What are *you* doing here? You are the last man I expected to see in *this* country." I told him my business, and he too thought I had as well go home: it was no time for preaching or Conference. As soon as I could rectify my vision, despite the slouched hat, the unshaved face, the gray flannel shirt, and the odd accoutrements of an impromptu knight, I

recognized a former student of Emory College. It was quite refreshing to talk with him, as he seemed well informed of men and events.

George was greviously insulted by a company of *Young Americans* who inquired of him if we were not Yankees and abolitionists. Their suspicions were awakened by the *color* of his travelling-bag. I found afterward that a *black* travelling-bag was considered as a type and token of the region from which a man comes—in fact, the *badge of a New Englander*. The recruits sent out by the "Emigrant Aid Society" were furnished with these articles, I guess, because they were cheap, and not because the *color* symbolized their sentiments and their mission. No matter how it came to pass, a *black* satchel furnishes a *violent* presumption against a man with *one* of the parties.

After a while, I found Brother Johnson, the superintendent of the Shawnee Mission; and as soon as he could arrange for it, we set out for his hospitable mansion. At Westport we were still in Missouri, though near the Kansas line. This is a flourishing town—trades largely with the whites and Indians, and is one of the points of departure for the Sante Fé mail, and for trade in "the Plains" in the *far, far West.*

From this busy town it is two or three miles to

where Brother Johnson lives. For a mile or two we journeyed along the road leading to the camp, where the army had been appointed to rendezvous. Presently we overtook a "solitary horseman," as James would say; that is, he was alone, though many more were in sight, behind and before. As we approached him, the young man who was driving asked me if I ever saw a Sharpe's rifle. I told him I never did. "That man," said he, "has one; if you would like to see it, I will ask him for it." Signifying my desire to see that far-famed instrument, he called the horseman by name, and told him I wished to see his gun. He rode up and handed it to me, coolly remarking that a few days ago he had killed a man with it at *three hundred yards*. The driver confirmed the statement by adding, "I saw him do it." This deed was performed at the battle of Osawattamie. The rifle is short and very heavy, but cannot be shot with accuracy, except at a very long range. Indeed, I was told that they were more to be dreaded at a half mile distance than a hundred yards. This is a pretty tough yarn, but is commonly reported.

We soon reached the Mission House, dined, and spent the afternoon in conversation, reading the papers, and resting. The school for the Indian boys and girls was just reöpened, after a brief

vacation, and but few had as yet returned. After a night of sound repose, Brother Johnson brought out his well-fed steeds, and we rode over the finest farm I think I ever saw. Such a combination of water, timber, prairie, and soil, is rarely met with. Such a herd of cattle! O the milk, butter, and beef! This is the very country for a lazy man, if he is not *too* lazy to provide in summer for *winter*. A four months' diligence will secure the *material* wherewithal to purchase the privilege of shutting himself up to eat, sleep, and *toast* the rest of the year.

After dinner, the carriage and the mules—which were mules, not in temper but in size—were brought out, and Brother Johnson and his wife, and George and I, took our seats for an evening jaunt upon the prairies. First, we visited the missionary, Brother Bolles. After a pleasant interview with himself and family, we returned, passing by the Mission church and the Shawnee Campground. Here these once wild men meet to sing and pray, and hear the gospel. How obstinate the unbelief of the world and the Church, about the conversion of the Indians! Admit all the difficulties: what then? Must they be cast off, as though never included in the covenant of redemption? Go preach the gospel to every creature—except the

Indians: is that the reading? No, no. Let the Church sow beside all waters, and trust the "Husbandman" for the harvest.

We passed the Quaker Mission, and found the premises abandoned, under a threat of Lane's men to attack and burn the houses. I understood the property would be for sale.

It was our purpose, in the course of the ride, to visit the camp of the army, and when we learned its location, we steered for that point. By and by we came in sight of the encampment; and, verily, it was a sight to a green one, who had never seen "war's grim array." The tents were pitched on the slope of an open prairie, beside a little stream running at its base. As we rolled along on the ridge, the whole panorama was visible. A thousand horses or more, of all sizes, colors, and conditions, were "staked out," and left to graze. This staking out is a very simple and convenient arrangement. A rope, from thirty to fifty feet long, is tied around the horse's neck, and at the other end is a pin of iron or wood, which is driven into the ground, and the horse can crop the grass within a circle, of which the pin is the centre and the rope the radius—where the grass is good—ample scope for a night's feasting.

The army was computed to muster twenty-seven

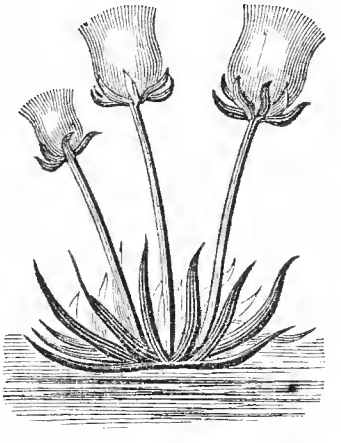
hundred men; but they were not yet all come in. The chiefs were waiting to concentrate the "host," before the descent upon Lawrence. As we drew near, some were manœuvering an old cannon; some were cooking, some lounging in the grass, some inspecting their weapons. On reaching the line of encampment, a soldierly-looking man very gravely ordered us to halt, and give the *password.* We confessed our ignorance. He expressed his regret at having to stop us, but said he must obey orders. Just as we were despairing of entrance, my quondam friend of the gray flannel shirt came to our rescue. Being a man in authority, the sentinel bowed, dropped his gun, and we had the freedom of the Camp. Here I was introduced to Generals Atchison, Clarke, and others, Colonel Titus, Sheriff Jones—still lame from his wounds—with other notabilities. They talked calmly of the wrongs of the Territory—of the outrages upon unoffending citizens, and of the necessity laid upon them to expel, by ball and bayonet, the perpetrators of these lawless deeds. While I was present, a woman of decent appearance came in and made affidavit, that the night before, five men, all disguised, came to her habitation, roused her from sleep, ordered her out, and burnt the house, with all its contents. She named two or three, whom she

said she recognized by their voices. At the sound of their names, I could hear low murmurs of vengeance from some of the men around. They were well known, it seemed, and were famed for violence and the plunder of the weak.

We tarried but a short time, as I was anxious to extend my ride into the prairies. On retiring, we ascended a long hill, and on reaching its summit and looking back, the scene was very picturesque. Forget the facts and circumstances which convened those men, and the object they had in view, and there was much of the beautiful in the vision before me. The white tents, the particolored costumes, red and gray predominating; the tethered horses, the patient oxen, half buried in grass; life in various forms, all eager and in motion; the softened hum of the camp, as it came floating on the prairie wind—all made a life-picture, to copy which would make an artist's fortune. We turned our eyes away to look upon more quiet scenes, the rolling prairies, the yellow flowers, the waving grass, and the silent sky.

From what I heard and from all I saw, I must say that Kansas is a beautiful country. As to land, verdure, and climate, I saw it under very favorable circumstances. The cold in winter is terrible. In September, the thermometer was nearly up

to ninety. The weather, though extremely cold sometimes, is variable, and often very warm in autumn. We closed a pleasant ride near sunset, and found that one of the preachers (Brother Rice) had arrived during our absence. He was on his way to Conference.



LETTER XXI.

KICKAPOO—A NIGHT ALARM—THE CONFERENCE—A SELF-DENYING MINISTRY—APPEAL FOR KANSAS.

On Wednesday, the 10th of September, before leaving for the seat of the Conference, I preached in the chapel at the Mission to the few Indian boys and girls who had returned to school, the teachers, and a few others. Returning through Westport, we reached Kansas City, and spent the night, waiting for a boat. Just before day the Emigrant came along: we went aboard, and in the afternoon reached Kickapoo. On our arrival, we found the place almost deserted. The women and children had well-nigh all fled. Most of the men had gone to join the army: a dozen or so "abode by the stuff." Some two or three *troopers* lingered about the "grocery," seemingly loth to leave its liquid attractions. The chance for Conference looked forlorn. We were invited and urged to go to Weston, in Missouri, but declined, determined to

avoid the very appearance of fear. With two or three others, I was assigned to the hotel. The house was set upon a hill so high, and the ascent so steep, that, on reaching it, a man felt that if he had to *return*, he had rather not go down. I pitied the poor beasts of burden about Kickapoo. Verily, they have a hard time of it.

Like all the towns on the Missouri river, Kickapoo is built on hills of very great elevation, and the ravines are deep and circuitous. The plan of the town covers a considerable area, extending from the hills to the prairie; itself, however, rolling and broken.

The only incident worth recording, during my stay there, occurred the first night. Retiring early, I had slept an hour or two, when I was roused by four or five reports of a gun, seemingly near a mile distant. Presently the sound of horse-hoofs, at full speed, broke upon the ear, and came nearer and nearer. Now the rider descends the long hill in front of the hotel, and now he comes up, and pauses at the door. In tones of alarm, and as if the emergency were very great, he called up some acquaintance, and told, in a subdued voice, some startling story. Soon all below stairs were up and stirring, and guns were brought out and loaded in haste. Then it seemed as if all the men

about the place were collecting. I concluded to rise and learn the cause of this excitement. Raising the window, I heard the horseman tell that five men attacked him, shot at him *five* times, one ball passing through his hat, grazing his skull, and throwing him from his horse; that he rose from the ground and recovered his horse, and made his escape; and that, as he fled, he saw at least forty men skulking in the thicket. I heard him through, and when he repeated his story to some new-comer, I observed several important variations, and satisfied myself that the whole thing was an arrant hoax. I returned to my bed, and slept soundly till sunrise. The citizens, however, stood by their arms and kept watch all night.

In the morning it turned out as I expected. The hero of the story had fired his own revolver, shot his own hat, and played a trick upon the sleeping citizens. The people, excited by rumors, and harassed by the terror of the times, were credulous, and felt that their safety depended upon their hostile preparation. Hence this midnight alarm opened their eyes, brought out their guns, and set them as watchmen upon every hill-top. They were the more sensitive, because Lane's men had come, a night or two before, within eight miles of them, burnt a little village, stolen the

horses and cattle, and driven the people out of the Territory. The very next day, I think, *nine* families, plundered by these Ishmaelites, passed through Kickapoo, seeking rest and security on the other side of the river.

The Conference met at the appointed hour—every preacher in his place, save one or two, whose location, in the midst of the depredators, compelled them to remain at home, for the protection of their families and their property. In this *mission* Conference, the chief business is the appointment of the preachers. Every thing was done soberly and in order; and we eked out the time by organizing a Missionary Society, preaching, and a general talk on our educational plans and prospects. On Saturday afternoon we adjourned, in peace and love.

This little band of brethren ought to enlist the prayers and sympathies of the whole Church. They deserve this, not merely as pioneers who are opening a new country for the occupancy of the Church, but because these examples of self-denial and hardships are of incalculable value in their reflex moral influence. To transfer from an old-established Conference, permanent society, good roads, luxurious entertainment, and all the appliances of easy living; to go to a new country, wild

and unsettled; to take long rides in search of a congregation; to endure hunger, cold, and nakedness; to be in perils oft, and fastings long, requires a strong faith and unquenchable zeal; almost, if not quite, perfect love to God and man. Such men contribute largely to the vindication of Christianity; as a Divine system; they pitch the piety of the Church upon a higher key, and, amid the obliteration of other features and the decay of other bonds, still link us on in likeness and fellowship with the apostles of the primitive Church. Many preachers, who have neither the manliness nor the piety to do likewise, yet admire these Christian heroes, and feel the attractions of their example, if not the quickening of a noble emulation. To hear the brethren pray and preach, to see them "happy," one might suppose they were ever ready for labor and sacrifice—to leave home, friends, all, for the kingdom of heaven's sake. But alas for our ignorance of ourselves! O! the delusions that steal upon us, in the guise of prudential calculations—"the fondness of a creature's love"—the pleadings of nature, interest, and common example. The glorious sentiments with which these sacred orators ravished us, made music on the air and died, singing their own requiem: the lofty emotions, which found utter-

ance in shouts, and vows, and promises of consecration, exhausted themselves in the raptures of the hour, leaving the Church defrauded of what she had the right to expect, and the subjects deluded, I fear, in their estimates of their own piety.

One thing at least is certain: it is hard work to get men for the foreign field, or for the more distant missions in our own country. To say nothing now of other regions, Kansas needs at least *ten preachers* to the work, as now organized, and *ten more* might be usefully employed. Where are they? *Where*? Why, almost anywhere. Not a few may be found in the crowded Conferences, or on the *supernumerary* list, because they could not find work to suit them, or because they had some "temporalities" to attend to, or wished to travel for pleasure. In other cases, one has gone to his farm, another to his merchandise; many more are holding on to some old homestead—working round on a few circuits—worn-out in manner and matter, while yet they are physically strong—a burden to the Conference, a perplexity to the Presiding Elders, and a trouble to the Church and the Episcopacy. A great many of the brethren, I apprehend, do not inform themselves of the wants of the Church; and if they do, they have been so

long accustomed to subordinate Christ's claims to their convenience, that they never seem to think or feel that these calls for help are providential, and addressed to them.

I need *five* young men to-day for regular circuits in Kansas. I have looked through four Conferences to find them, and have talked personally with preachers here and there, and cannot get a supply. Making all the allowances the case calls for, this is rather a reflection upon our pretensions as a denomination. Where is the spirit of our fathers?

I say "young men" are wanted: first, because they would cost less to the Missionary Society; and secondly, because the inconveniences of the country for families are for the present great. Married men with small families would not be rejected; though we cannot promise them well-furnished parsonages, or very comfortable homes. Still, this class of men are there; and I heard no whinings about hardships. True, the cold is extreme, snow abundant, the winter long; but men of the world bear these evils for the sake of land and office. Hundreds and thousands are going there to find homes on rich, cheap soil. Methodists are among them, and they all need the gospel. As preachers, our commission has no respect to latitude or climate. The command to

"Go" is unqualified; and the Discipline enjoins that we go where we are "needed most."

Who will go to Kansas? We want no steel-clad warriors, but men with "tongues of fire." We want no land-hunters, but strangers and pilgrims, who declare plainly that they seek a country, even a heavenly. In the name of the Church we will give "bread to eat, raiment to put on," work to do, and souls to win. Other expenses may be charged to Him who pledges "everlasting life" in the world to come. Death will come there as well as here; but I think it is a *little nearer* to heaven from the field of self-denying labor than from the home of self-indulging rest. And sure I am, the prairie grass will weave sweeter memorials over your lonely grave, than all the monuments art can fashion, or affection buy. In the city cemetery or the country churchyard, human friends may come to weep, but about the tombs of the pioneer preacher, the angels of God will encamp.

LETTER XXII.

MISTAKES OF THE SOUTH AS TO KANSAS — SOLDIER-EMIGRANTS—ABOLITION AGGRESSION—SOUTHERN MISTAKES —A LETTER ON KANSAS AFFAIRS — DIFFICULTIES OF TRAVELLING IN KANSAS—THE WRONG PARTY.

WHETHER the contest in Kansas resulted from the desire to occupy the best portions of a rich Territory, destined to become a populous State, or from a Free-soil mania, or slavery propagandism, or from the manœuvres of political demagogism, I shall not undertake to settle. Perhaps all these motives met and mingled, and derived much of their power to do harm from the rivalries of land companies and their speculations. Explain as we may the condition of things, last summer and autumn it was a reproach to our government and people. The policy of the North and the South, in sending armed bands, under the pretence of settlement, was unquestionably wrong in its inception and objects, and its results have been disastrous. It was a movement in conflict with the free operation of the principle of the famous *Kansas-Ne-*

braska Bill, and directly calculated, perhaps intended, to bring on a sectional conflict. It is not mine to sit in judgment on the character, motives, or management of *the leaders*, but, as might have been expected, the large majority of those who went out under the drilling, drumming process, were mere adventurers, reckless of the principles involved, without interest in the country or its institutions, and unworthy representatives of the region from which they came. Young, rash, and often desperate, of course they were ready for strife and spoils. Sometimes disbanded for want of funds, or from the spirit of insubordination, many of these *soldier emigrants* became wandering desperadoes. Without land, or home, or occupation, they became a burden upon the party they went out to aid, and a discredit to the State from which they came. With such materials, considering the influences at work, it was very easy to furnish bloody stories for the newspapers, and to make the lawless deeds of a few bad men evidence against North or South, as to their spirit and intentions. This was, of course, as unfair as to make the rowdies of a town the standard for judging an entire community.

It is, however, beyond all controversy that the North, in their blind zeal to make Kansas a Free

State, provoked all the troubles that followed, by picking up and forwarding a population to serve their purposes, and that the Abolitionists were the aggressors, by their violence and rebellion, and lawless intrusions upon the rights of others: still, the South erred in imitating a bad example. She ought to have sent citizens, not soldiers; and to have left these Abolition knights to the law, and the troops of the General Government. This plan would have saved the Territory to the South, and a quiet, *bonâ fide* emigration might do it yet. Not that I think the climate, soil, and productions favorable to slavery; but it might be recognized in her Constitution, when the time for her admission as a State shall come; and there would be slaves enough, along with this, to identify Kansas with the Southern States, in the councils of the country. No physical law bars the institution. *It is there*, and *there it might remain.* Nevertheless, I think the South will lose it, by her own fault rather than by the contrivance of her enemies. In confirmation of this view, I append a portion of a private letter, written in December, from one who resides in Kansas, and knows whereof he affirms:

"We are enjoying peace and quiet now in the Territory, and hope it may be permanent. Yet,

some think it but the deceitful calm preceding the fearful earthquake. Governor Geary is evidently a man of nerve—rather inclined to obstinacy; yet, we think, the man for the occasion. He has been active in arresting and punishing violators of the law. Over one hundred of the marauders have been arrested—some tried and acquitted; others condemned; others have broken custody and fled—I suppose to a free State. Twenty-two have been sentenced for confinement in the penitentiary; but as the Territory is destitute of this important public institution, they are confined at Lecompton, at hard labor. One was sentenced to six years' confinement, another to two, and twenty to five years. Thus, you see these unfortunate men, seduced by Lane and Company, are made to bear the burdens, while the guilty authors of the expedition and outrages are permitted to go free, and even lauded as patriots and heroes. Since the political excitement has ceased, we have been annoyed by another, but little less destructive to morals and religion—I mean the speculation in land-claims, and particularly the sales of the 'Delaware Trust Lands.' These sales have been progressing some weeks, and the end is not yet. The settler has so far been permitted to bid off his land at valuation price—ranging from $1.25 to $10 per acre. These lands

are not subject to preëmption. Yet Squatter Sovereignty has made 'Uncle Sam' succumb. Claims in and around Leavenworth City have been sold at heavy rates. Some lands—bleak prairie lands—have sold for $200 and some for $250 per acre, and the purchaser to risk competition in public sale. The lands are all sold at public sale. Lots in this place, 24 by 125 feet, range from $150 to $1500. This city is only a little over two years old, and there are now about three thousand inhabitants.

"The political features of our Territory remain in *statu quo*—undecided—various opinions afloat. The South has every advantage, but seems slow to occupy the ground. The capital invested in the Territory is, I think, mostly Northern. And what Southern capital is here, is principally on the rivers, where they can turn it to a heavy per centum. And the South, in reference to Kansas, seems to have 'curled' itself up, and concentrated itself, morally, politically, and religiously, into these words: 'Will it pay?' There has been a species of meanness practiced here by Southern capitalists which deserves rebuke, and which will meet, unless the policy change, a heavy rebuke in the loss of Kansas to the South. It is not worth while to conceal the matter. We want good *bonâ*

fide settlers here—not such samples as were sent here by some from the South, who seemed to put a high estimate on themselves because they were of no account, and who, because the citizens here did not put a high estimate on such capital, left in a rage. The South has good men; and these we want, or none. The capitalists of the South seem desirous that the young men bred in the school of adversity should settle the country, improve the soil, drive back the wolves, and fight the battles, while they enjoy the ease and luxury of their Southern homes. Most of the toil and burden, thus far, has been borne by poor young men—men who are not personally interested in Southern property, and whose pecuniary interest would suffer nothing by the North obtaining ascendency here; yet they have engaged in the work from principle, believing the country requires sacrifices at their hands. These they have cheerfully made. The days of this burden-bearing are well-nigh numbered, unless men of capital and means pursue a different course. I am a Southern man politically. I love the South—believe she is right, religiously and politically, at home; but she is certainly derelict in reference to Kansas.

"As a Church—the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in this country, in the affections and confi-

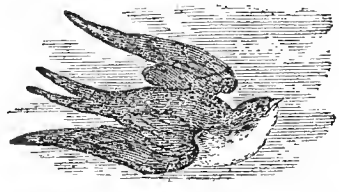
dence of the community, has the vantage-ground; but, in reference to number of preachers, the Northern Church has the advantage of us, considerably. We stand, as to numbers, as we were at the formation: two transferred from us, and one superannuated, and three transferred to us. We have anxiously looked for transfers, but in vain. We need them—we must have them, or give up the field. If we are to die, give us a decent burial, and keep us not unsepultured. The preachers that are here, came here at the call of the Church; and here they are willing to stay, provided they can have the numbers to supply the increasing demand. You may think me a little obtrusive; I hope you will pardon me. I don't know as much as a Bishop, but I have seen more of Kansas than, probably, most of them. I believe this country ought to be saved to the South. I believe, if this is made a Slave State, we shall have peace and quiet, with law-abiding citizens: otherwise, confusion and disorder, with a law-defying community."

I did not travel in the Territory much, for lack of time, and because it was not safe to do so. The hazard of life was not great, but the liability to loss of horse was imminent, almost anywhere. They did not steal horses, they only "*pressed them:*"

that is, being interpreted, they *took* them without leave and against your will. The patriots having gone at the call of their country, in a great crisis, of course, concluded they were entitled to forage on friend and foe. As it is more pleasant, commonly, to ride than walk, they pressed horses, in stall and on the road. I saw many families who had been robbed, burnt out, and driven off. This was the work of the Abolitionists—Lane and his men. The Missourians and the pro-slavery men were preparing for vengeance, and were resolved on such a chastisement of these freebooters as should result in their expulsion or extermination. Governor Geary's arrival was timely—most opportune. War—not skirmishing—was at hand, and blood would have flowed like water. The pro-slavery men—the "Border Ruffians"—demonstrated their love of law and order, their indisposition to go beyond self-protection, by quietly dispersing at the command of legitimate authority, and leaving the punishment of the evil-doers to the powers that be; while the men who embodied and represented Northern sentiment—the *Beecher Sharpe's Rifle Tribe*—determined carrying out their own nefarious plans, rather than submit to law, public opinion, and popular suffrage; and finding that a just and firm administration was about to

be inaugurated, fled, carrying with them the spoils of their guerilla warfare.

These facts explain the troubles in Kansas, show the temper and designs of the parties, and confute for ever all the partisan misrepresentations of the Northern press. Their flight was confession, and confession proved their previous hypocrisy—their treasonable betrayal of the peace of the country. If ever the secret history of this "Kansas war" should be written, it will appear that the South, so far from attempting to cheat the North, either by fraud or force, has been either careless of her own interest, or has confided too much in the justice of her enemies. It is not the first time in the progress of the world that the *wronged* have been charged with the crimes of those who betrayed them, nor that the offending party have sought the sympathy of mankind for persecutions they never endured, but only inflicted. Such is life, and man, and history.



LETTER XXIII.

WESTON—CHINESE SUGAR-CANE—GROWTH OF THE WEST—WELL-MOUNTED PREACHERS—TAKING IN NEW APPOINTMENTS—RICH COUNTRY—FRAUDS ON THE GOVERNMENT—GLASGOW, FAYETTE, PARIS, MEXICO—MODERN CONFUSION OF TONGUES—CONFERENCE AT LOUISIANA.

HAVING concluded the Conference, we crossed the river to Weston, intending there to spend the Sabbath. We found comfortable quarters with the Rev. Wm. G. Caples, one of the preachers of the Missouri Conference.

In his garden, I saw the now famous Chinese sugar-cane. If it will grow elsewhere as in that place, I do not wonder at its rapidly spreading reputation. I think the stalks were fully seventeen feet in height. The field of corn, however, by its size attested great depth and richness of soil —a soil seldom found, save in the Platte Country of Missouri.

Unless I were very familiar with the localities, I should not like to walk about Weston at night.

Such hills, ravines, gullies, precipices, surely never before were found in the corporate limits of a town. As you move along the streets, the houses look as if they were peeping down from their slippery altitudes upon the transactions of the lower world, and one, unused to see human habitations so exalted, feels almost afraid that, in their curiosity, they will lean a little too far and come down with a crash. Vast sums are annually expended in repairing the streets and keeping up bridges; and very often, when the work is finished, the next rain sweeps thousands away, and the repairers of breaches are called upon for new plans and fresh labors. Despite physical incongruities, the place prospers. The people are intelligent, enterprising, and well to do in the world. There is here a High School connected with the Conference, and well patronized.

In the West the common impression of its future greatness is embodied in the names prophetic of future development, I suppose, for they are certainly not justified by present appearances. Most of the little villages, albeit there is nothing to mark them, save a wooden warehouse and a few small houses round about, are dignified with the title "City." We have along the river above Independence, Kansas City—Delaware City—Lea-

venworth City—Platte City. The name, perhaps, helps the sale of lots, attracts population, and may be a trick of speculators—a plan to raise stocks, yet I can but regard it as one of the signs of what all regard as the "manifest destiny" of the country. Nor is this idea a figment of fancy. A few years ago, and Fort Independence was the extreme verge of American civilization, and we were accustomed to regard a man who had been *there* as a bold adventurer. All beyond was wilderness, the range of wild beasts and savage men. Now some one reports that Fort Laramie, four hundred miles beyond Leavenworth, is the *geographical centre* of the United States and Territories. The trade from Leavenworth to Santa Fé is immense. One man, I learned, has *twelve thousand* oxen on the line, and, in the transport of merchandise and military stores, finds use for them all. The tide of population stills rolls on, and, if life endures, I expect to hold Conference in Santa Fé, and to ride on a railroad where the trail of the buffalo is now to be seen. Let the Americans push on, subdue the earth, and replenish it.

In the mean time, I must pursue my travels. Tuesday morning, the 16th of September, we left Weston for the seat of the Missouri Conference. Brother Caples had the kindness to take us in his

buggy, with a pair of horses just such as a travelling preacher ought to have. Indeed, I found him so well fitted for getting about, that I appointed him an agent for Central College. It is due to him to say that he had other and peculiar qualifications, besides his equipage. I love, however, to see the brethren well mounted. To itinerate is their business, and they ought to *fix* for it. I mean no reflection, but simply to state a fact: those preachers do best generally, who have little beside their "travelling apparatus." Wealth is a fearful snare to a minister of the gospel. It is a miasm, out of which comes a *host of diseases.* Strong men grow *delicate*, young ones superannuate, single ones need nurses, and married ones become too affectionate to leave home. Still, let the preacher have a good horse—if need be, a pair—and, if it suit him best to ride on wheels, a carriage of some sort. Then air, exercise, and diet for his body, reading, praying, preaching for his soul, and he is likely to become—an "acceptable" preacher.

We passed through a very broken and fertile country during the first day's ride. Never before did I see a region where the hill-tops were as rich as the valleys. We reached Brother Sollot's about sundown, and met a hearty welcome and

cheerful entertainment. Next day we passed through Liberty, a thriving town, and in the evening reached Richmond just as a furious storm of wind, hail, and rain came on. A hospitable roof furnished us a safe retreat from its pitiless peltings. The darkness and rain prevented preaching. On the following day, we set out early, with the hope of reaching Brunswick by dark. We rode well-nigh all day through a very rich prairie region, and saw large farms well cultivated. We dined with a Mr. Turner, and found him and his family very anxious for a preacher to be sent to their neighborhood: promised to send one, if possible. How many places, just outside of the regular circuits, might be taken in and regularly served, if we had the spirit of our fathers! In the old Conferences as well as in the new, there is many a waste place, where souls are left to perish, just because the preacher lacks zeal to add *one* more appointment to his *large* work of four or five. This fact demands the rigid scrutiny of the Church. There is a fearful wrong somewhere.

In the afternoon we passed through one of the finest prairies I have ever seen, and through its bosom there rolled a limpid stream in quiet beauty. The green banks and the crystal waters were lovely to the eye, and, while they give a charm to

the scenery, are in fact a neighborhood convenience. This stream is of considerable depth, is fed by never-failing springs, abounds in fish, and, doubtless, is the *summer resort* of all the *fashionable cattle* in that region. It may be that humbler stock seek refreshment from its bright waters.

As the evening shades came on, we found, on inquiry, that we had missed our way; so, turning round, we sought a resting-place, lest night should catch us wandering about, not knowing whither we went. We found a farm-house shortly; and when the proprietor came out on our call, he recognized Brother Caples, and bade us welcome. Our host and family were Methodists, and seemed to regard our misfortune in losing the way as a favor of Providence to them.

In passing through this portion of Missouri, the traveller occasionally sees a shanty without an inhabitant, and in other places a pile of lumber and an acre or two of ploughed ground. What do these signs signify? They mean, in my opinion, an egregious trifling with conscience and the law of the land. Under the "Graduation Bill," these lands are in market to *settlers*, at a *bit* (twelve and a half cents) an acre. Some men put up these rude huts, plough a little, sleep on the premises a few nights, and then swear that they are in possession;

and thus get land worth fifty dollars at a *bit* per acre. In this way the Government is *bit*, conscience is *bit*, truth is *bit*. The first may survive the wound: how the other two will fare, the future will declare. The American passion for land needs restraint, or at least regulation.

On our route we passed several villages, struggling up into the dignity of towns. My appointments compelled me to hasten. I was set down to preach at Glasgow on Friday night, and to dedicate a church at Fayette on Sunday. We reached both in due time, and delivered our testimony with some comfort, and I trust to profit.

About these towns has congregated no little wealth and intelligence. At Fayette the two Conferences (Missouri and St. Louis) have located a college: indeed, two colleges—a male and a female institution—supply the citizens with the means of education. I trust the arrangements made during the session of the Conferences will succeed in establishing Central College permanently, and securing funds for its further efficiency.

Monday morning, the 22d of September, found me one hundred and twenty miles from Louisiana, the seat of the Conference, which was to meet on Wednesday morning. But, thanks to Brother Caples and his noble team, on Tuesday at sunset we

completed the journey. Monday night we spent in Mexico, a new town which has sprung up on the line of the Hannibal and St. Joseph's Railroad. It was dark when we arrived, but the bell was rung, the people met, and I tried to preach.

The people of Missouri, like the people of other States, seem terribly afflicted with barrenness of invention, in naming their cities and towns. This is an American weakness, this mimicking of Europe and imitation of one another. It makes geography an enigma to beginners, and compels a man, in talking, to as much particularity, if he would be understood, as you commonly find in a legal document. If I say I preached in Glasgow, in Paris, in Mexico, and say no more, who will understand me? Some Babel Tower has certainly fallen among us: the confusion is great, and increasing.

I found pleasant lodgings with Brother Draper in Louisiana—not the State, but a nice town in Missouri, on the Mississippi river. The Conference session was a session of grace. Souls were converted, business was done in a devotional spirit, and the impression in behalf of our Church interests was fine. The preachers are deeply religious. I formed friendships there, delightful to memory.

LETTER XXIV.

TO THE ST. LOUIS CONFERENCE — THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI — STATE FAIRS — ST. LOUIS — CHARLESTON — THE CONFERENCE — WHERE CONFERENCES SHOULD BE HELD — TO CAIRO — CROSSING THE OHIO RIVER — TO JACKSON — MEMPHIS CONFERENCE.

THE St. Louis Conference comes next in order. We left Louisiana at night in the steamer Keokuk —a noble boat, with a generous captain. The crowd was great, and no small fraction of the Conference took passage, adding to the squeeze. Berths and beds were appropriated, and I had made up my mind to nod through the night, when the Captain politely offered and urged me to take his cabin on the upper deck. I accepted the tender, and found, as I have often done, that the very things which seemed to be against me turned out to my advantage. Instead of a narrow cabin and a narrower berth, I had a room and a bed. This upper department the steamboat men (I know not why) call Texas. It is a figurative application of the name, and contains a compliment to Texas proper.

Soon after midnight the fog became so dense that we had to lie by till nine o'clock the next morning. The upper Mississippi is clear, deep, beautiful, wholly unlike itself after its junction with the turbid Missouri.

When we reached Alton, many of the passengers went ashore to attend the State Fair in Illinois. The mornings, I learned, were devoted to the exhibition, and the afternoons to political harangues. The multitude in motion for the Fair grounds was a living current. The great attraction was an expected speech from Senator Douglas.

In due season we reached St. Louis, where we proposed to rest a day and spend a Sabbath. Here too the Fair was coming on the following week. The preparations for it were upon a magnificent scale. The grounds and buildings cost upwards of one hundred thousand dollars, I heard. The amphitheatre was a model arrangement for such an exhibition. The Rev. R. A. Young, who accompanied me on this visit, and who was familiar with all the localities of the city, took me around, and cheered my progress with narratives, anecdotes, and brilliant calculations of the future of this great city.

I preached at First Church next morning, and at Centenary at night. Methodism is growing in St.

Louis, but there is room for indefinite expansion. The Church ought to keep in this place a strong, effective force, and to expend largely of her missionary treasures in carrying the gospel to the poor and the outcast. Without such aid, the policy of well-nigh all denominations, in building fine houses of worship with rented seats, will leave the poor without the gospel. Might not our city preachers do much by preaching one or more nights in the week in private houses or rented rooms, to those who seldom or never enter our regular churches? Five sermons a week is not *very hard* work for a sound man. I have read of one of our American fathers who preached *fourteen times during his rest-week.* The above query is addressed to all whom it may concern.

On Monday, with some forty preachers, we left on the steamboat Editor for Charleston, the seat of the St. Louis Conference. We reached Lane's Landing, where we were to disembark, early in the day, and found every variety of vehicle in waiting to convey us some fifteen miles to the village. The dust was deep and light; an impalpable, but, as we found before we finished our journey, not an imponderable powder. With five or six others, I was assigned to Judge Handy's — a good preacher's home. We had a pleasant ses-

sion, but were greatly hindered in public services by the weather. The town is in a flat prairie—deep, rich soil. As I have said, the dust was terrible for two or three days, and then came the rain, and we literally waded in water. Still, the kindness of the people, their deep interest in all our proceedings, the marked impression of our anniversaries, preaching, and ordinations, overbalanced all our inconveniences. By the way, I am thoroughly persuaded that it is good policy to carry our Conferences to *out-of-the-way places*. The inconvenience is a trifle compared with the good accomplished. The more the people, insiders and outsiders, see of Methodism as a system of practical working, the better they will like it. An Annual Conference will impress any mind with the grandeur of our plans and the energy of our operations, with the Christian fidelity of the preachers, their self-denial, their zeal, and the rigid scrutiny to which every interest is subjected. And then the ministrations of so many minds, to a people unused to variety and change, can but give an impulse to thought, emotion, and plan. In the cities, the great thoroughfares of commerce and travel, where everybody and every thing goes, we come and go, and hardly leave a trace behind. Let the Conferences go where they will do most

good, without regard to railroads, rivers, or distance; open the doors, and let the people come in, and see and hear for themselves, and they will understand our economy better, coöperate with us more cheerfully and liberally, and be furnished, from personal knowledge, with satisfactory answers to all tirades against Methodism, whether from the press or the pulpit, books or men. Such is my conviction, observation, and experience.

On Wednesday morning, the 14th of October, Conference having adjourned the night previous, we took up the line of march for Ohio City, opposite Cairo. Buggies, barouches, wagons, horses and mules were in great demand, and there was no little of the ludicrous in the appearance of our company when fairly under way. Wit and humor beguiled the trip of its weariness, and turned the jolts and discomforts of the journey into amusements rather than complaints. By some mishap, we landed at the river a mile or two above the regular ferry, and our only chance to cross was in two little skiffs, where the river was a mile wide. It looked like very adventurous navigation. We had to go over by instalments of five or six at a time. Withal, we had to foot it up the stream for half a mile, to find a point in the banks sufficiently inclined to allow any thing like a grave and

decent descent to the water's edge. When my time arrived, I found I had for my companions the Publishing House, in the person of F. A. Owen; the St. Louis Advocate, D. R. McAnally and wife; the Presiding Eldership of the St. Louis District, R. A. Young; and a Doctor of Divinity, C. B. Parsons; and Young America, my namesake George. Now, this was a serious cargo for two skiffs of the smallest kind, and both to be rowed by one man. Brother Owen weighs two hundred and twenty, Brother McAnally two hundred and twenty-five, Brother Parsons two hundred and thirty; the heft of Brother Young is not great, but his *altitude* enables him to look *down* upon most terrestrial things. The rest of us were neither very long nor very heavy, but we felt that we had as much of real value at stake as the biggest or the longest. Sundry pieces of baggage were also thrown in, and when we were all set, there was no gunwale to brag of. But we reached the shore in safety, and felt thankful for our deliverance.

"Each pleasure hath its poison too." We were off the water, but on the softest, most yielding sand-bed I ever saw. It was a mile and a half to Cairo, and, afraid to leave my trunk, lest it should be missing when a boat came along, I undertook with George's help to carry it. He soon broke

down. Brother Owen came to my aid, and still our progress was slow and painful. Brother McAnally overtook us, and, laughing at our distress, seized the trunk and laid it upon his shoulder. I politely rebelled against this expensive kindness, but he walked the faster, and made light of such a burden. Presently, a cart came to the rescue, and I privately thought that Brother McAnally, despite his strength and kindness, sympathized with me in my joy at its arrival. I was certainly glad, for my sense of obligation was growing heavier than my trunk.

Cairo grows finely, and must be a place in time to come. A fine hotel adds to its attractions. We had to tarry till morning, waiting for a boat. The river was low, and the time of running very irregular, so we took the first boat that came along. Having a day or two to spare, I had resolved to accompany Brother Owen to the Memphis Conference at Jackson. We did not reach the city of Memphis till Sunday noon, and concluded to lie over till Monday. I preached twice on Sabbath. We left next day for Jackson, and on our arrival found that Conference would adjourn early next morning. So we had travelled a hundred miles and more just to shake Bishop Early by the hand, take a look at the Conference, and turn round and

go back. I remained and tried to preach at night; next day returned to Memphis, and left on the following day for Batesville, the seat of the Arkansas Conference.

LETTER XXV.

WHITE RIVER — JACKSONPORT — BREAKFAST — TO BATESVILLE — THE CONFERENCE — TO PRINCETON — TRAVELLING IN THE "TRICK" — THE FIRST NIGHT OUT AND THE CATS.

WHITE RIVER is certainly one of the most beautiful streams in all the country. Along its course there is none of the wild grandeur of the Hudson or the Tennessee, but its clear, deep, flowing waters, its cane-covered banks, its graceful curves, the fertile lands on either side, all conspire to make a trip upon its bosom very pleasant. The channel is narrow, but uniform, and it is navigable, the year round, as high as Jacksonport. In high water, boats ascend five hundred miles above. Very much of the country along this stream is yet unoccupied, save by hunters. We saw their cabins, and occasionally got a glimpse of these American Nimrods. The noise of the boat will bring them out of their green retreats, sometimes to sell their game, and sometimes to refresh their eyes with the sight of a human face.

We reached Jacksonport about the dawn of day, and went ashore. In the hotel we found a drinking, swearing, rowdy crowd. The passengers from the boat at that early hour must have taken the establishment by surprise, or else the superintendent is a bad judge of the rule of proportion. At any rate, the company *oversized* the supply upon the breakfast-table. My portion was a half cup of coffee, so called, and one small potato. George, I believe, managed to get *two* potatoes, but missed the coffee—by no means an intolerable deprivation.

On going out to hunt a conveyance, I met several of the preachers, all on their way to Conference. It proved to be one of the days of the tri-weekly hack, so I engaged our passage. When all was ready, we found *eight* passengers; and the utmost capacity of the coach would not admit more than *five*. Being the last who had spoken for a seat, I considered myself anchored for that day. I asked the driver who had precedence. He replied, "Those who get in first: that's the rule in this country." Four of us were in in a twinkling; and, with a bad road ahead, the driver declined to take any more.

Along the route of thirty miles to Batesville, we passed through a section of country which, be-

cause of its great fertility, is called "Oil-trough Bottom." If oil be the type of richness, then is the bottom rightly named. But, despite the soil, the drought cut short the crop. The clouds must drop their fatness upon the earth, if any land make much of what the farmers call "truck."

We reached Batesville in the afternoon, and found pleasant lodgings with Judge Neely. The Conference session was pleasant and profitable. I was very glad to find a very decided improvement in all the financial interests of the Church, and a braver and more hopeful spirit among the preachers. They are waking up to their responsibilities, and are beginning to appreciate the fact that they are capable, by the blessing of Heaven, of improving the Church and the country. They have a large field, hard work, many trials; but they are doing good, and the time is not distant when "the little one shall become a strong nation."

From this point to Princeton, I was to have for my travelling-companions Brothers Owen and Watson. As there were but four of us, we were anxious to go in the same vehicle, and deputed Brother Watson to make the necessary arrangements. He soon reported that a contract was made with the stage which runs tri-weekly to Little Rock, and which was to leave Tuesday,

(next morning,) at eight o'clock. So we lay down and slept, well satisfied with the prospect before us. While at breakfast, the driver hailed us, and out we went, bag and baggage.

A glance at the vehicle satisfied me that the day of trouble had come. "Why, Watson, is this your stage? We cannot get in it, much less go in it." "It is not what I expected, certainly; but I guess we can get in." We proceeded to put in our trunks, and the fact was plain that there was no room for the owners. The *stage* was a carriage of the sort that is known in different places by different names. By some it is called "Jersey wagon;" by others, "peddler's wagon," "dearborn," "whim-my-diddle," "go-cart;" but I concluded that the inventive genius of Arkansas had hit the thing exactly, when I learned that it was commonly called "*trick*." That is the right name, whether we consider its size, its shape, or its business. To put such a thing on the stage line, as a public convenience or conveyance, is most certainly a trick—an outrageous, intolerable *trick*. And then *this* trick was one of the poorest tricks. Old, shackling, ready to fall to pieces, it looked unsafe to sit in it when it was standing still. To cross mountains with it was a daring adventure.

After due search for some other *trick*, we found

that this was our only chance, and we submitted to our fate. It was at last determined to take out the hind seat, and for two to sit on our trunks. This being done, Brother Watson and I entered, and found, to our dismay, that we could not sit upright with our hats on. It was a damp, cold, windy day; the curtains were, some gone, the rest torn; and as we had already bent our wills to our circumstances, so now we *bared* our brows to the storm. But hold—we are not all in yet. Young America must not be left behind. The Publishing House has business at Princeton, and both must be provided for. The driver and the mails too—they must go. Here was a problem. The *trick* was already full, and all these to come in. What shall we do? I will tell how we did. The mail-bags were put in front, or rather in one corner, on the driver's side; and when he took his seat, his feet were nearly as high as his head. He was a mathematical figure which remains to be defined in some future work on Conic Sections. I straddled my trunk, and took in George between my knees, as though I were on a pony, with the stirrups too short and my little son in front. Brother Watson arranged his valise on my left, and squeezed himself into that corner, and then neither of us could move without the consent of

the other. Brother Owen was still upon his feet, and looked as if he were meditating some desperate deed. When the word was given, with a groan, prophetic of suffering, he proceeded to take the last little vacancy; and when he settled himself, the *trick* groaned from top to tire. All aboard, the body rested upon the axles; and so the absence of springs fixed us right for the hardest kind of jolting. Confidently expecting a break-down, we rolled off. Riding bareheaded for a mile or more, I found myself taking a violent cold, and concluded to try another experiment. I tied my handkerchief around my head, Indian fashion, and drew my blanket over it; and the exhibition I made raised such a laugh, that pain and trouble were lost in merriment. Brother Owen would turn round as well as he could, and a glimpse would last him a mile. He declared he meant to have my picture for the Home Circle. Not able to sit erect, I looked, in my *outré* "fixins," like a monk with his shaven pate and cowl stealing to his cell; or a half-frozen Indian seeking refuge from the wintry blast; or the old Sheik Houssein Ibn Egid, of Wady Mousa, (minus the beard,) who appears in the last number of Harper's Magazine.

A few days of my life's travel are memorable to

me. The day we left Batesville is one of them. Road rough, broken, even mountainous; cribbed so close together in that little *trick*, that we had to get out every few miles to straighten and rest our aching joints, nothing earthly could have made it tolerable, save good cheerful companionship. The physical discomforts of the ride were numerous; yet we enjoyed ourselves, and all, doubtless, remember it only as one of the rough incidents of itinerant life.

A little after dark we reached our stopping-place. The trick does not run at night. At supper the hostess handed a cup of coffee to one of the company: he passed it on until it reached George, who set it down by his plate, saying he expected it was too sweet for me. The lady replied, "she reckoned not, for she had no sugar, nor could she get any for love or money." When the hour of retirement came round, Brothers Owen and Watson were each directed to a small room adjoining the one in which we were sitting, while George and I were to take the bed in the corner. Some young men who belonged to the establishment, and two trick-drivers who had met there that night, remained by the fire to tell tales and laugh. I found it impossible to sleep, and had to ask them to adjourn. Rid of them, I composed

myself to rest. But, alas! "the best-laid schemes of mice and men gang aft aglee." I had been asleep an hour or two, when I was roused by the mewing of a cat. Presently in came another, responding in a louder and sharper key, and another, and another, until six or seven had mustered. It proved to be a riotous assembly—in fact, hostile, belligerent. Whether parties were as numerous as cats, it was too dark for me to determine. Whether the border ruffians had intruded upon the squatter sovereigns, or some old settler was defending his *preëmption right* from the invasion of speculators, or the new-comers were wrangling over *a claim*, I will not undertake to say; but there was a general row, fierce and formidable. I rose in my bed and commanded the peace—insisted upon law and order. But the squalling drowned my voice, or passion defied my interference. One of the heroes of the fight tried to whet his claws for keener rapine by scratching the walls. This waked George—who, (amid "the noise and confusion" he could not judge well of localities,) supposing the cats had invaded the bed, commenced a vigorous kicking and crying—'*Scat.* He would have won the field if these intruders had been near him. After duly weighing the peril of the experiment, I reached down, seized one of my boots,

rushed upon the feline warriors, and brought on a general stampede. I kindled a fire, and, finding the enemy had decamped, closed the door, and once more retired. Soon the hogs under the house renewed our troubles; but we had made up our minds to sleep, and we did sleep.

LETTER XXVI.

OUT OF THE "TRICK"—PREACHING AT SEARCY—FACE OF THE COUNTRY—HICKORY PLAINS—RED OAK—LITTLE ROCK—TULIP—ARRESTED ON THE ROAD—PRINCETON—THE CONFERENCE—IN ANOTHER "TRICK"—THE STEAMER FOX—NAPOLEON.

THE stage from Little Rock having met us, and being rather more commodious, we prevailed upon the drivers to exchange. Soon after leaving in the morning, we saw several deer leaping through the woods. George was delighted, as they were the first he had ever seen.

At Searcy, I had an appointment to preach; and Brother McCoy having promised to take me on to Little Rock, I parted with my travelling-companions. The congregation was good, and the service, I trust, profitable. One brother at least was convicted, and proved that the Word was "a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." I was preaching on the causes which defeat our prayers, and among others mentioned the indulgence of bad

tempers. I gave several illustrations. After service I went home with Brother M., and one of my hearers came over to see me in the afternoon. In the course of conversation, he said, "Did you ever hear about my killing that mule?" "No, sir. Why do you ask such a question?" "Because he *haunted* me mightily, while you were preaching today." He then proceeded to relate how, in a fit of passion, he had shot a mischievous mule, and his mortification and shame, when the excitement of the moment had passed.

The land in this portion of Arkansas is not rich, but I suppose, with good cultivation, quite productive. Wild pigeons, in fabulous numbers, visit this region; and in some places, known as pigeon-roosts, acres. of forest have been destroyed by them. The people kill them at night by the thousand.

Not very far back in the past, this must have been a prairie region, for the forest trees are young —of comparatively recent growth—and generally just about the right size for first-rate firewood. It is an inviting country, healthy, easy to clear, productive, land cheap, and game abundant. As the traveller pursues his way, he is struck with the frequent recurrence of those signs which mark the progress of *hurricanes*. They levelled the woods in

their fury, but seem to have been local—never of any very great extent, but most fearful in their desolation.

I reached Hickory Plains in the afternoon of Thursday, the 6th of November; preached at night, formed several very pleasant acquaintances, and next day preached at Red Oak: dined with Brother Adams, and, through rain and mud, set out once more for Little Rock. About four o'clock a furious storm came on, and we were glad to find a shelter eleven miles short of our destination. The next day was bitterly cold, and the mud several inches deeper than before. We made slow progress toward the capital, and on reaching the ferry, opposite the city, found, as usual at such places in the West, a perfect caravan of emigrant wagons. The old mill-rule—"First come, first served," is the law of ferries also; and accordingly it was long, long before our turn came. The river was swollen, the current strong, the boat a very slow craft, and, of course, our delivery on the other bank a tardy result.

At Little Rock we were to lie over till Monday. Brother Wingfield had arranged for preaching at night and on the Sabbath. I found comfortable lodging with Brother Bertrand, and devoted the afternoon to repose. The city is beautifully lo-

cated, has some fine buildings, and, when the country is more settled, and the projected railroads are finished, will doubtless grow into considerable importance as an inland town.

Brothers Watson, Owen, and I, hired a carriage to carry us to Princeton. We travelled over a poor country, but pleasant company and freedom from accidents made the journey agreeable. We expected to reach Princeton on Tuesday night, but on approaching Tulip—a little running village—in a long lane ahead of us we saw quite a company of men and women; and as we drew nigh, a man stepped out, ordered us to stop, said the road was barricaded with ladies, and that we could go no farther. By the time he had delivered his speech, he had reached the carriage, opened the door, and ordered us out. I replied to him,

"We must go on. Conference opens in the morning, and I *must* be there."

"I'll have you there before the people have done their breakfast. *Get out, get out!*"

Brother Owen remarked, "That is Willis Summerville: I know him of old. You will have to stop."

"My good brother," said I, "I have not heard from home for weeks—expect letters, and must go on to-night."

"No, you won't, I tell you. Brother Moore, where are the letters? Give them to him: take away his last excuse. Get out, every one of you. Boy, turn them horses round: drive in at that gate. No preacher or bishop ever passed me yet. Bishop Andrew stayed here once, and you are no better than he. Besides, some of you will have to preach here to-night: the appointment is already made. *Get out.* Come, out with you!"—and so we were taken captive, and our imprisonment proved a very pleasant affair. True to his promise, Brother Summerville had us up before day, and we were in Princeton, eight miles off, long before nine o'clock.

Princeton is a small town containing clever people, and several brethren of the neighborhood moved in and occupied vacant houses—camp-meeting style—to entertain the preachers, and enjoy the services of the Conference. We had a pleasant time, a harmonious session, interesting anniversaries, and we parted in peace and love. The Conference—the Wachita—is rapidly developing. It is in a very inviting region to those who would like a new and promising field of labor.

Once more we hired a hack—or, more appropriately, a "trick"—to take us to Pine Bluff. Crammed in a narrow, rickety, topless concern,

with a team whose speed by extra appliances was three miles per hour, on a cold, bleak, November day, over a rooty road, we were glad to take up early in the evening at Dr. Rhodes's—a South Carolina Methodist, who has wandered to the West.

Next evening, we reached Pine Bluff, settled with our driver, and took lodging at the hotel, hoping every hour for a steamboat. We ate and slept, and rose in the morning and ate again, and speculated upon the probability of getting off by the river at all. Just as we concluded to go out in search of a conveyance by land, we heard the puffing and saw the smoke of a boat. We hastened down to the bluff, and there lay the "Fox"—a little, dirty, wheezing, asthmatic stern-wheeler, bound for Napoleon, the place to which we wished to go. To go or not to go, was the question. It was hard to settle. The captain was reluctant to take us—advised us to wait for another boat; but our time was precious, other chances very uncertain, and we determined to try the Fox. I was in favor of any thing rather than another day's ride in an Arkansas trick. The material question with me was, Can I stand straight in the cabin, stretch full length in the berth, and find room in the daytime to change my position? I felt that my limbs

were entitled to rest after their long confinement, and any thing in which there was "scope and verge" enough for change and motion would suit for a time, being a change for the better. Having satisfied ourselves that we could stand up, lie down, move about, we took passage, in defiance of dirt, smoke, and slow motion. We found a Frenchman or two for fellow-passengers. While taking on some cotton, we bought a bushel of pecan-nuts to crack and eat, when we had nothing else to do; and thus provided, we floated down the Arkansas. In size, convenience, and general arrangement, our little craft bore about the same relation to a first-class steamer that a wheelbarrow bears to a regular stage-coach. But the privilege of stretching oneself was such a luxury, that we congratulated one another on our escape from *land tricks*. When, at night, the rain began, and signs of a long wet spell were all about us, we really felt as if the little Fox were a refuge.

The river had been very high, but was falling. On the second day we passed a large boat, which, during the freshet, had run upon a sand-bank, and had been left by the retreating waters high and dry. Just after we had passed, one of our cylinder-heads blew off, and we had to lie by till the piece could be sent a mile or more to a blacksmith-

shop. Some six hours were lost in this way. When the headpiece came back, the awkward engineer broke it again, and another trip to the shop was necessary. By this time we were restless, impatient, nervous. Near sundown, the news came up that the damage was repaired. Well, now we move. A little withered Frenchman, who had been very quiet, hearing the paddles turn once more, came out, looked around, and sighing as though his last hope had fled—"Ah me! now we is to have *de fogs*"—and sure enough "de fogs" brought on a premature night, and so we cast anchor and longed for day.

Soon after we entered the Mississippi river, we met a boat going to Memphis. Brother Watson hailed her, bade us farewell, and left us to float downward to Napoleon. We reached that place just as the "H. M. Wright," a noble boat, was ringing her bell to leave for New Orleans. We were soon transferred from one boat to the other. As we entered the magnificent saloon, the Frenchman turned to me and exclaimed, with rapture in every feature, "Why, we could put de leetle Fox *in here* too."

LETTER XXVII.

RECRUITS—GAMBLERS—VICKSBURG—GEN. M'MACKIN'S HOTEL—BILL OF FARE—THOMASTOWN—NEW-FOUND KIN—IRA BIRD—MISSISSIPPI CONFERENCE—WORN-OUT LANDS—MUD-WAGON—CAPSIZED—A BLIND DRIVER.

We found on board the H. M. Wright, which is a fine steamer, a great crowd. Among the rest, several officers of Walker's army, and a company of recruits, mostly very young men. From the exhibition they made of themselves, they will not much improve the morals of Nicaragua, whatever else they may do for the new republic.

We reached Vicksburg about four o'clock in the morning. Rising at that early hour, I was surprised to find not a few who had spent the night in gambling. Among the party were some who during the day affected to be sober, sedate gentlemen, and who, I learned, at home contrived to maintain the character of praiseworthy citizens. Yet here they were midnight gamblers, fleecing the green boys who amid smoke and liquor were

wasting the substance of their fathers' life-long industry. Prodigal youths!—veteran hypocrites! The serpents and their victims! The heart *is* deceitful and *desperately* wicked. Heaven save the young men of the land from the wiles of their seniors in depravity!

On landing, we went to the hotel of General McMackin, who has the reputation of being the politest man in the Union. When we went down to breakfast, I was much amused by the novel mode the General has of informing his guests what has been provided for them. In one corner of the spacious dining-hall there is a counter on which the products of the kitchen are spread. There stands "mine host," knife and fork in hand, and in tones peculiar to himself he cries—"*Nice turkey —hash—cold ham—fresh sausages—beefsteak, the best in the world;*" and then, addressing the waiters, he will say, "Hand round the rolls—hurry up the hot cakes;" and all his various directions worked into a sort of song; and were it not that the tune is a nondescript, one might imagine that the old Roman fashion of combining music and feasting had been revived on the banks of the Mississippi. This plan is a substitute for the *printed* bills of fare, now common in all the best city hotels. He says, I understand, that the reason he adopted this unique

method was, that some years ago he kept a public house in Jackson, and many of his boarders were members of the Legislature, and could not read, so he had to *call out* for their information. Finding it cheap and easy, he had continued it. Soon after breakfast the Rev. C. K. Marshall came down and transferred us to his hospitable mansion.

The Sabbath was devoted to preaching, and on Monday we took the cars for Canton. We arrived after dark, and in a heavy rain. Having picked up several preachers on the route, we found no little difficulty in obtaining conveyances to Kosciusko, still forty miles distant. We succeeded at last, and set out under the pledge to be carried through in the day. But rain, mud, high waters, defeated us. Just at night we reached a creek which was swimming; our carriage, too, broke down; and in a heavy shower we got out to foot it, a mile or more, to Thomastown. After diligent search, we found a log on which we could cross, and so, picking our way every man for himself, we took up the line of march. The carriage and baggage we left to come over in the morning.

On reaching the village, we took refuge in a house of entertainment kept by Mr. Cotton. He proved to be a warm-hearted, clever old Hardshell Baptist. When we were all (eight in number)

seated around a rousing fire, trying to dry our garments, our host inquired, "Are you all preachers?" He was answered affirmatively.

"Mercy upon me! I thought there were enough passed here yesterday to take the country. Are there any more behind?"

"O yes, several on the other side of the creek."

"Well, well, I never saw the like before. Where is that man you call George Pierce? I want to see him: my wife is his *cousin*."

When I was pointed out to him, he examined me with a critic's eye, as though he expected to see the horns of the Beast, or the spokes of the Iron Wheel. Satisfied from his inspection that I was not dangerous, he led me into another room and introduced me to my cousin. Never having met before, of course there were many questions to ask and answer, of the various branches of our tribe. So our night's adventure turned out a very pleasant affair.

Instead of waiting for the carriage in the morning, I borrowed a horse from my new-found kin, and, accompanied by one of the boys, I started for Kosciusko. I overtook a great many of the brethren, and among the rest old *Ira Bird*, as he is called. He has long been superannuated, but was going up to Conference to take work again.

He travelled the Appalachee Circuit when I was a little boy, and he seemed to rekindle the fires of his youth, as he talked with me of the incidents of these days. This veteran travels in the old style, and would as soon think of backsliding as of giving up his saddle-bags. Although well mounted myself, I found it difficult to keep up with him. I was eager to reach the Conference in time, and the fiery spirit which warms his old body was but obeying its native impulses; and on we went, leaving all the rest to follow as best they might.

Despite our haste, we were a little behind time. The preachers, aware of our circumstances, had met and adjourned. It was soon arranged to meet again, and the first day's work was done. I shall not soon forget the comfortable quarters I found at the house of Mr. Thompson. The Lord reward him in both worlds! The Mississippi Conference at Kosciusko may be known as the rainy Conference. Day and night the showers fell. The Sabbath, however, was a sunbright, balmy day. At night the rain commenced again, and continued with slight intermissions to the close at noon on Tuesday, the 30th of November.

Dr. Hamilton, the Secretary of the Tract Society, and Brother McTyeire, the Editor of the New Orleans Advocate, were with us at this Conference,

and proposed to accompany me to Alabama. Bad roads, high waters, suspended stages, made the choice of routes quite a problem. After many inquiries and long debate, we concluded that the longest way would be the quickest passage. So we made arrangements to go to Lexington, and there to take stage for Holly Springs.

The brethren Hamilton and McTyeire were in one vehicle, Owen, George and myself in another. We stopped to dine with Brother Harrington, and as we were crossing the country by neighborhood-paths rather than roads, we had to obtain very minute directions. We got a written way-bill, and as we often reached a point where many ways met, it was amusing to see us all halted, while one or more examined the map of directions. Without the paper, we should most certainly have been lost. I have read of the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties, and, without doubt, *we* learned very *laboriously*. After dark a little we reached Lexington, and found the stage would leave at four o'clock A. M.

Before we move again, I will say that I was no little surprised to find the portion of Mississippi over which I passed, very much worn and exhausted. Get away from the river, and you find old fields, gullies, numerous, deep, and any thing

but comely. Many places have an old, forsaken look, reminding one of some of the most dilapidated portions of Georgia. New countries will wear out, after all, especially under the same miserable system of tillage which has marred the older Southern States.

In the morning, before daybreak, we were crowded into what they very properly call a *mud-wagon*. There were nine of us, and no little baggage, and away we sped at the lowest gait compatible with what is called progress. We had to work up hill and down hill, and the only matter of congratulation among us was, that we did not have to carry a rail. When we reached the breakfast-house, Brother McTyeire, whose taste is cultivated and judgment prompt and clear, declined to eat, and concluded to walk on. The speed of the stage may be guessed when I say that we did not overtake him under eight miles. To the credit, however, of the stage-line, it ought to be known that his locomotive powers are a little extra. His figure is of the most approved model for a long race.

Soon after taking him up, we reached Carrollton, a very picturesque town, with some neat and tasteful private residences. As the stage stopped to deliver the mail and change horses, we all sought

relief in a walk of two or three miles. Weary, sore, and dinnerless, we travelled on till night, when we halted at a log-cabin for supper. The signs of neglect and discomfort, within and without, made the meal, which was good in material, well cooked, and abundant in quantity, a very agreeable surprise.

With a new driver, fresh horses, but the same old wagon, we set out in the darkness for Grenada. We had not gone more than a mile or two before we capsized. The night was cold; we were all wrapped up in cloaks and blankets, the curtains all fast, and we lay in pi, or rather in strata, primary, secondary, and tertiary. A general inquiry, "Anybody hurt?" a common answer, "No:" then a hearty laugh; and all taking things very quietly, till a Mississippi Judge, who lay under Brother Owen and another, began to make signs of distress. The point of egress was small, and relief to the Judge, "like the good time coming," was slow in its approaches. Finally we were all out—none broken or bruised: the driver made his apology, we righted the wagon, resumed our seats, and rode uneasily the rest of that stage. To increase apprehension, we found out that our driver was unacquainted with the road, and was nearly *blind.* We put a man with eyes by his side, and after

many outs and ins, we reached Grenada. From this point there were two routes, one by Memphis, the other by Oxford and Holly Springs. A council was held: Brother Owen concluded to lie over till morning and take the Memphis route: the rest of us determined to adhere to the original plan. He went to bed, and we took the stage. The incidents of that night and the next two days demand special notice.

LETTER XXVIII.

REALIZATION OF FOREBODINGS—PERSEVERANCE REWARDED —ALMOST A DINNER—DISTRESSING CASUALTIES—HOLLY SPRINGS.

On going out to take our places, we found a regular coach; and if the good people of Grenada had not given us such terrible accounts of the road, we should have felt ourselves greatly improved in circumstances. We were assured of trouble, and verily we found it. The night was dark, the road one long mud-hole, the driver new, unacquainted with the teams, timid withal, and in *nine hours* we travelled *sixteen* miles. After a good deal of muttering and complaint, of regret that this route was chosen, and many evil prophecies of delay, failures to connect, and so on, we resigned ourselves to the chances, and went to nodding. In the darkness, by and by, there was a jolt, and a crash, and a dead pause.

"What's the matter now?"

"Get out, gentlemen, and help me, if you please."

With reluctance we unwrap and step forth. We find ourselves *out* of the road and *in* a ditch. Now for rails and prizing! At it we go. After much heaving and setting, we raise the front wheels to a level; the driver mounts his box, gives the word to his horses—they jerk one at a time, and down comes the coach again! Once more we raise it up. Now the horses refuse to pull at all. Some of the passengers despair—give up; others, shivering with cold, propose to make a fire and camp till morning; others of us insist on renewed efforts. Another vigorous trial, and the difficulty is overcome.

"Walk up the hill, if you please." It is done. We take our seats and move along slowly. After a mile or two the driver halts his team: "Gentlemen, there's something the matter with the coach: she don't move right, somehow." Out we go again. "Light the lamp, and let us see what's the matter." On examination, it was found that the king-bolt had been broken by the concussion in the ditch, and that the body had fallen from the bolster on the coupling-pole. Here was a scrape. To rectify, required skill and strength. After many abortive plans and efforts, the work was

done. Now for a few more ejaculations on the folly of coming this way. Brothers Hamilton and McTyeire, disciplined from the outset to this route, would jeer me for being persuaded to adopt it. I was on the defensive all the way. Hamilton would show by *figures*, based on distance and time, that it was the very worst thing we could have done. McTyeire, with a sigh, would concentrate his regrets by a sententious recapitulation of the mishaps behind and the prospects ahead, and wind up with a look which seemed to say, "Catch me on another ram's-horn route!" I would try to cheer them with the hope that we should reach Tuskegee in time—that we were improving our knowledge of geography, and learning to shift for ourselves amid the difficulties of life. But Hamilton was sick and nervous, McTyeire was disappointed in a visit to his friends, and the best speech I could make left them regretful and disconsolate.

We took a cheerless breakfast at Coffeeville, walked a mile to stretch and get warm, spent the morning amid the usual delays, and about eleven mired down in a creek swamp, and got out to work in mud and water. As all could not work at one wheel, McTyeire and I walked ahead, and stopped to rest upon a narrow bridge. Presently the driver

reined up his horses for a pull; the leaders did their best—every trace broke—they were frightened and ran away!

The horses were obliged to cross the bridge, and by the time they reached it, seemed infuriate with the panic: the broken traces were flying at every bound, and we were in peril. Our only chance was to get on the outer edge and flatten ourselves into the least possible space. The maddened steeds passed us without injury, and as they fled through the swamp on the other side of the creek, I too felt that all was lost. McTyeire at last found some relief to his burdened spirits in a hearty laugh at my blank, despairing countenance. Presently, a man came along with an ox-team, and we got him to hitch on, and pull out the stage. By this time we heard that the runaway horses were hung in a tree-top and brought to a halt. So we sent after them, and while the driver was repairing the harness, McTyeire and myself concluded to travel on, telling those we left that we would wait for them somewhere in the road. We walked till we were tired, and called at a farm-house and asked for dinner. We were enjoying ourselves most luxuriously when the stage was announced. "Tell them to hold on—we must finish this operation." We had worked the livelong night, and more than

half the day; walked, in all, about fifteen miles, and our appetites were ravenous, and the meat was savory.

"My friend," said Brother McTyeire, "go out and invite them all in: I know they are hungry."

"Tell them the dinner is fine—the very best we have had," said I.

In the mean time we were doing our best.

"Another piece of that ham, if you please, ma'am."

"Have you another cup of coffee?"

"Plenty, sir."

"The driver says he will not wait, gentlemen."

"This is the finest corn-bread, the freshest butter," said McTyeire.

"The stage is starting, gentlemen."

"Let us go, McTyeire, I am tired of walking."

"I suppose we must; but this is too bad!"

By way of revenge on our impatient friends, we described the dinner with the most appetite-provoking particularity; told them how refreshed we were; jeered them on their empty stomachs, and predicted a late supper and a poor one.

Finally we reached the last stage-stand on the way to Oxford. Just as we refitted and were ready for a new start, the snow began, and as I had taken a seat on the outside, I saw and felt all the fury of

the storm. My black blanket was very soon a blanket of another color. After dark we rode into Oxford, and as we expected to go right on, the driver by request took us around to show us the town. Soon after our arrival, we were informed that the Tallahatchee river was impassable, and the road to it too bad for night-travel, and that we must lie over till morning. Dr. Hamilton sighed: Brother McTyeire cried, "*Detention — detention.*" "Let us take a room and go to bed. In sleep we will forget all our troubles," said I.

Before sunrise we were once more under way. Sure enough, when we reached the river, it was swollen, and the rope was gone; and the ferryman said we must go ten miles out of our way, or go over two at a time in a canoe, and wait for a stage from Holly Springs. The latter plan was adopted. Dr. Hamilton and I went over first, kindled a fire, and encamped. When all were over, Brother McTyeire and I determined to set out afoot. We had a swamp a mile wide to cross, and found no little difficulty in finding a way through it. By tacking and turning, crossing lagoons on logs, and wading a little, we reached dry land, and started for Holly Springs.

We travelled three miles—met the stage—gave the driver directions where to find our friends;

and as noon had come, we concluded to make another experiment in the way of dinner. We stopped at a fine-looking house on the roadside—were kindly invited in—dinner was ordered, and we undertook to improve the interval by conversation with our host. He proved to be a Georgian—knew my father well, and seemed glad of our visit. We found him a man of many sorrows. In the midst of wealth he was desolate. Bereavement had broken him up. Within the year he had lost his wife and two grown children; and another, who had gone to Texas, he supposed from his last intelligence was dead also. A few days before, a tornado had swept his plantation, overturned his barns, gin-houses, and out-houses generally, killed some negroes, maimed others for life, and spread ruin around. There he was, a gray-haired old man, amid the wreck of his plans and his hopes, mourning the absence of his loved ones. We talked with him of providence and grace, and pray that his afflictions may be sanctified to his salvation. Again, as we sat down to dine and were beginning to enjoy our meal, the stage-horn blew an impatient blast. We dispatched a messenger, begging for a brief dispensation, but Pharaoh knew not Joseph, and he would show no favor. So we had to deny ourselves a refreshing repast,

and—what in this instance we regretted more—leave our grief-stricken host without prayer. In our hearts we remembered him, and trust our Father in heaven for the answer.

This portion of Mississippi shows the marks of hard usage. It is a fine farming country, but has been better.

We reached Holly Springs before night. To this point we had been looking as the terminus of our stage-travel, and the end of our travelling troubles. But, alas! we found that the heavy rains had made a breach in the railroad, and that the time the cars would start again was very uncertain. We planned, and talked, and bewailed our detention, and then went to sleep. The next day was the Sabbath. We reported ourselves to the brethren, and in the forenoon I tried to preach. At three o'clock P. M. the cars left, and we went down to LaGrange, twenty miles, in order to take the train from Memphis, early in the morning.

LETTER XXIX.

ANOTHER BREACH — BUZZARDS' ROOST — AGRICULTURAL ABUSES — TUSKEGEE — THE ALABAMA CONFERENCE: ITS CHARACTERISTICS — PLEASANT INCIDENTS — HOME AGAIN — THE END.

WHEN the train from Memphis came along on the morning of the eighth of December, we once more set out for the Alabama Conference. But, alas! another breach in the road arrested our progress, and we were constrained to take stage and creep along bad roads for forty miles. An afternoon and night were consumed in this slow travel, and about daybreak we reached Buzzards' Roost, where we shook hands with the stage and "shed not a tear."

Buzzards' Roost! what a name for a beautiful country! This valley of the Tennessee will compare favorably with any farming region of the South or South-west. Level, fertile, and very generally under cultivation, it looks like one vast plantation. Long-settled and hard-worked, the

signs of exhaustion are very apparent. The great staple—King Cotton—wears the earth, and, while clothing the people, strips the ground to nakedness. Where once the plant grew like a tree, the overtasked and weary soil can only produce a stunted shrub. The scattered habitations indicate the wealth of the proprietors, and they now loom up amid the naked fields like monuments commemorative of what has been. These lands in good seasons yet produce remunerative crops, and might easily be restored to their original fertility. The Southern people, however, obstinately cling to the notion that it is easier and more profitable to fell the forest, and work virgin lands, than to fertilize the old fields. When the country is older, and the population more settled, a change of policy will become a necessity, and practice will reverse the theory. There is too much new land at present for the introduction of this vivifying experiment. The day will come, and a distant posterity will wonder at the reckless abuse of the earth by the generations past.

After the toil, weariness, and detentions of the last few days, it was cheering to learn that the roads through Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama were uninjured by the recent rains, and that the trains were regular in their trips. The only

material drawback upon our enjoyment, under these circumstances, was the fact that, after all our efforts, we should be a few hours behindhand. Conscious of having done our best, and assured that the brethren would not suspect us of neglect, we surrendered ourselves to the luxury of memory and hope. We remembered our troubles "as waters that pass away," and, hoping that the clouds would not return after the rain, we rejoiced in our deliverance.

About noon of Wednesday we rode into Tuskegee. The light of many a familiar face beamed upon us, and the cordial welcome of the brethren made us feel how pleasant it is for those whose hearts and aims and hopes are one, to meet and mingle in social Christian fellowship.

The Alabama Conference is a large body, having some striking characteristics. There is an unusual proportion of young men—men in the prime and vigor of life. Gray heads are scarce — the old men look fresh. The average of talent is fine— the inequality not so marked as in most other Conferences. In its organization, plans, and spirit, some leading minds have been at work. Their impress is visible. But the large majority have been brought up to the level of their counsellors and guides, and now, without jealousy or the

collisions of rivalry, they all work together. The spirit of the body is a power. Every interest of the Conference is to each preacher a personal affair. He feels and works for it, as men commonly do for themselves. They are members one of another. Reputation is common stock. Whatever great or good thing is done, becomes part of the common inheritance. They do not exalt Brother Z. or Dr. X., and leave him in isolated grandeur to be admired; but if either has wrought a wonder upon the earth, the Alabama Conference must have the glory. "All we are brethren." The family is one, and the rejoicing over success is mutual. This feeling might run into excess, and become an evil; but properly regulated, it is a lever of tremendous force. It is a resultant power, supplemental of the individual energies of the preachers, and is bringing—nay, has brought—this young Conference into the front rank of every department of usefulness. The preachers have diffused the same spirit largely among the people. They sympathize and coöperate with each other. Hence their large missionary collections, their thriving University project, their well-balanced financial sheet, at their Conference sessions.

While we all should cultivate broad, catholic sympathies, and rejoice even though others excel

us, I like that spirit which identifies a man with his own Conference, and makes him strain himself to bring the body to which he belongs ahead with the foremost. Those men who just breathe along, content to be tolerated in society, as not being exactly a nuisance, and yet neither think nor plan nor work for the general good, are an incubus—a drawback upon the energies of their betters. The same thing holds true of bodies of men. I confess to a feeling of impatience and disgust with those drowsy, yawning men, especially in the Church, who never feel the quickening impulse of a generous Christian emulation, and who, when reminded that they are in the background, drawl out, "Let well enough alone," and disparage the progress and zeal of others, by uncharitable insinuations and *pious* prophecies of their future ruin.

The rapid development of the Alabama Conference is an encouraging example of what may be accomplished by ministerial brethren, working intelligently, harmoniously, and with one heart, in the same great cause. May they live and prosper yet more abundantly!

Tuskegee, where we met, is a beautiful town, with an intelligent population. Churches abound, and well-organized Female Colleges—one belong-

ing to the Baptists, the other to the Methodists; and with two weekly papers representing the political parties of the State, the community is well provided for in all respects.

The Conference session was pleasant and profitable. Several topics of grave interest outside of the regular business, but pertinent to the interests of the Church, came before us, were seriously discussed, and satisfactorily disposed of.

In the examination of character, a pleasant little incident occurred, which I will here relate. The tale has its moral.

The church in which we assembled was crowded from day to day with interested spectators. On one occasion two Baptist ministers were introduced to me, presented to the Conference, and invited to be seated in our midst. Not long after this ceremony—in the regular order—a brother's name was called, and the usual question propounded, "Is there any thing against him?" The Presiding Elder, in representing him, remarked that he had succeeded well in his circuit—a circuit hitherto regarded as a very unpromising field for Methodism. Among other evidences of his zeal and influence, he stated that at one place the preacher had taken several Baptists into our Church.

A brother rose and said "that statement needed

explanation: it might be a grave objection to the passage of the preacher's character. If he had been stealing into other people's folds to *proselyte*, unsettling the minds of members about their Church relations, he should vote against him, because this transferring members from one Church to another was a great evil: no good came out of it: it was not promoting Christianity: the Church of Christ was not *extended* by any such operation: it was the preacher's business to get the people of the world converted; *such* cases were *accessions* to the Church—the other plan was a cheat: one Church might count more, but the friends of Christ were not multiplied." To these sentiments there was a hearty approving response. Such was the mind of the Conference: the Presiding Elder said he would explain: the preacher had done nothing wrong—he had not been proselyting—but in the neighborhood where these Baptists lived, there had been a great revival, and when the doors of the Church were opened, these Baptists joined of their own free will. Among them, said the Elder, was a preacher, whose remark on the occasion explains it all. After he had joined, a friend said to him, "Why, I thought you were a *Hardshell*." "So I was," said the preacher; "but *these Methodists have ringfired me, and burnt off my shell*, and I could but join them."

Here there was a happy laugh—a gush of good-humor. Our Baptist brethren seemed to enjoy the *dénouement* as well as the rest.

Conference ended, I went to Columbus to make my annual visit to my father and sisters—spent a day and night, and then set out for home—"sweet home." In due time I arrived, and found all well and glad to see me. Thank God for home and friends and rest! So I felt and feel. O, if after absence, weariness, anxiety, labor, it be so sweet to repose a while among those we love, what to earth's tired pilgrim must be the rest of heaven—the raptures of that long-sought home! May the writer and his readers in due season reach that better land, and dwell in bliss for ever!

THE END.